







THE  
POLITICAL LIFE  
OF  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
GEORGE CANNING,

FROM  
HIS ACCEPTANCE OF THE SEALS OF THE FOREIGN  
DEPARTMENT, IN SEPTEMBER, 1822,  
TO  
THE PERIOD OF HIS DEATH, IN AUGUST, 1827.

TOGETHER WITH  
A SHORT REVIEW OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
SUBSEQUENTLY TO THAT EVENT  
BY  
HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY,  
AUGUSTUS GRANVILLE STAPLETON, Esq.

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SECOND EDITION,  
INCLUDING THE PART OMITTED IN THE FIRST

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## PREFACE.

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**T**HIS work was intended for publication early in 1830; the object being to remove, as speedily as possible, many erroneous notions which prevailed, respecting Mr. Canning's policy.

The first two Volumes were already printed before the conclusion of the preceding year, when certain intimations, sufficiently vague in their character to render an explanation of them impossible, induced the Author, with reluctance, to suppress the work for an indefinite period. But, in the course of last October, a pamphlet having appeared throwing aspersions upon the memory of Mr. Canning, with

the view of exalting the then *Heau* of the Government, the Author at once resolved to disregard all personal considerations, and to publish, without any further delay than was necessary to complete the third volume.

This resolution (which was communicated to several individuals) was further strengthened, in consequence of another pamphlet, which issued shortly after from the press, and which, although bearing the stamp of *official* origin, nevertheless, with even greater unfairness than the first, sought to magnify the merits of the late Premier, at the expense of Mr. Canning.

To the Representative of this lamented Statesman the Author is indebted for the means which have enabled him to compile the following pages. Without the freest reference to Mr. Canning's papers — a reference which his Representative alone had the power to accord — the task which the Author has now performed, he never could have undertaken.

In executing it, his main object has been so to exhibit the great landmarks of Mr. Canning's policy, that their true bearing and tendency may be understood and appreciated.

If this end be accomplished, it is hoped that it will compensate for the many inaccuracies of composition which may be found in these volumes, and which are, in a great degree, owing to the want of that attentive revision, which the Author had not leisure to bestow.

*Dec. 1. 1830.*



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## ERRATA IN VOL. I.

- Page 141. line 29. for *as should*, read *that it might*.  
line 30. dele *make it*.  
187. line 15. for *having*, read *the existence of*.  
225. line 21. for *cannot be given*, read *be not entitled to*.  
231. line 7. for *They*, read *Their relative positions*.  
258. line 10. for *waked*, read *awoke*.  
343. line 2. dele *that*.  
— line 3. dele *that he*.  
363. line 11. for *conferred*, read *reflected*.  
387. line 4. for *France holding*, read *for France to hold*.  
420. line 27. dele *that*.  
449. line 13. for *by preventing*, read *prevented*.  
— line 14. after *money*, insert *and thus*.  
458. line 12. for *were*, read *had been*.  
481. line 4. before *hateful*, insert *to him*.





# MR. CANNING'S

## POLITICAL LIFE, FROM, &c.

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### CHAPTER I.

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF EUROPE FROM THE FALL OF  
NAPOLEON TO THE DEATH OF THE MARQUESS OF  
LONDONDERRY.

THE exertions of Great Britain to curb the power of Napoleon, and to defeat his projects for the attainment of universal Empire, were not made without an expenditure of blood and treasure commensurate with the magnitude of the mortal struggle in which She was engaged.

To excite his country to these exertions, and to encourage her in making the necessary sacrifices with cheerfulness, were the objects of Mr. Canning's unwearied activity; nor was there any publick man whose efforts produced a greater impression on the opinions of his countrymen. He had never, from the commencement of Napoleon's career, been dazzled by its brilliancy; nor had he ever refrained from stigmatizing those

actions by which its splendour was obscured, in those terms, which their iniquity, or their atrocity demanded.

He felt assured that England would never obtain from Buonaparte terms of peace, consistent with her dignity and her interests, unless she raised herself to a station, which would compel him to proffer conditions befitting her acceptance. The honour and prosperity of England were not only incompatible with the French ruler's schemes of unlimited aggrandisement, but they were dangerous to his authority over the nations which he had conquered. For while the integrity and independence of the British Empire were preserved, the oppressed and degraded nations, who groaned under his yoke, would ever have regarded Great Britain, as the only Power capable of assisting to rescue them from their degradation, or to avenge their sufferings.

A peace, too, by which an unrestricted intercourse would have been established between the two countries, might (while the principles of their respective governments continued so opposed to each other) have endangered the stability of Napoleon's throne. The example of the free institutions of this country, if closely examined, might probably have excited a spirit of enquiry amongst his own subjects; and the minds of the French nation, once turned from contem-

plating the glory of their external conquests to consider their internal condition, might have been seized with a desire of imitating that example, too strong even for the authority of Napoleon to repress. A state of war, whether accompanied by victory or defeat, is attended with such feelings of excitement, that it absorbs all minor interests, and leaves no leisure for reflection; and although, indeed, such days as those of Austerlitz and Jena were purchased by France at the expence of much individual suffering, yet if families felt the horrors of the conscription (by far the heaviest of all the evils that Napoleon's Government inflicted), the nation forgot them in the vast increase of their territory, in the unprecedented power of their Emperor, and the unequalled triumphs of his arms. In fact, it was not till after the fatal expedition to Russia that this mode of recruiting the armies pressed with such cruel severity on the French people. But notwithstanding this, and their other grievances, the mass of the population was much happier under Napoleon's reign than during any previous period of their history; certainly happier than under the ancient dynasty, whilst few did not prefer even the then existing despotism to those alternations of anarchy, and misrule, which had been terminated by its establishment.

The duties of a military life, also, gave occupation to those restless spirits, which, left without employment, might have been engaged in machinations to overthrow that same government, which they were willing to defend, at the hazard of their lives, so long as it was identified with the greatness of their country. But although men of that character might be content with a government which did not leave them in idleness, and under which they were able to gain distinction and renown; and although the people of France possessed more freedom than they had ever before enjoyed; yet the imperfections of their government were so glaring, that Napoleon must have been conscious that, in a nation which only a few years before had (with apparent unanimity) asserted the doctrines of liberty in their most extravagant form, numbers must have existed who secretly repined at seeing an absolute monarchy established, in every way opposed to the principles which they had professed, and which they had undergone so much misery to support. War, therefore, was the very element of Napoleon's power; but war with England, until she should be reduced so low that none of his tributary States that might venture to brave his anger, could hope to receive security from her protection, and until the ruin of her institutions should be effected, and the danger of her example done

away, was evidently his interest, as it undoubtedly was the one grand object of his life.

Mr. Canning saw that we were embarked in a deadly conflict, from which any temporary respite would have been worse than useless, and was aware that no lasting peace could be procured, except by compelling the enemy to agree to terms, in every respect consistent with the honour and interests of the British nation. That the deliverance of those European States, which had the courage to struggle against Napoleon's tyranny, was as essential to our interests as it was to our honour, Mr. Canning always maintained; nor did he less strenuously contend that the plan of insulated policy, which consisted in abjuring the Continent, and shutting up ourselves in our own island, was one which would be fatal to our safety, because we should not long be allowed to act upon it unmolested. The only effect of such a policy, he said, would be to leave the nations of the Continent an easy prey to the French Emperor; and he argued that, when each country had separately been subjugated, Napoleon would have been able to wield the whole united power of Europe, and to turn that power, notwithstanding the reluctance of some of its constituent members, against this devoted country.

That this was no chimera, but an evil actually

to be dreaded, is abundantly manifest from the way in which all the conquered States were compelled to contribute their respective quotas of troops in the war against Russia. • Setting aside, therefore, the higher considerations of national reputation and national faith, it was our interest to exert ourselves in behalf of other nations, even if we derived no advantage from so doing beyond the suspension of immediate danger to ourselves.

But Mr. Canning also loudly proclaimed, that while Great Britain stood so high amongst the nations of the world, her own dignity and character required her to assist and protect weaker nations against oppression; not only so far as that assistance could be afforded consistently with her own interest, but so far as it was not absolutely incompatible with her own security.

It was from the publick avowal of doctrines such as these, by the best and most enlightened of the British statesmen, and from the success of those statesmen in persuading the country to act up to their spirit, that the British name became revered throughout the continent of Europe. The deliverance of Europe was the avowed object of the war; the object avowed by Mr. Pitt in its outset, and by Mr. Canning in urging its continuance, when the colossal power, which the mighty genius of Napoleon had created, led many to look upon its attainment as utterly hope-

less. But when, at last, that and much higher objects were attained; when Europe was not only delivered for a time, but placed beyond the possibility of re-conquest, Great Britain, who had always kept alive the spark of resistance, held the proudest station amongst the States and Empires of the world.— Mistress of the seas, counting amongst her subjects the greatest General of the age, at the head of victorious armies, she despatched her representatives to the congress of assembled Monarchs armed with a double power,—her great physical force, and the moral predominance derived from the reflection, that, from the commencement to the close of the eventful struggle, her strength had never, but in one solitary instance, been put forth, except to succour the oppressed, and to vindicate throughout the world the freedom of mankind. But although truth compels the confession that our conduct towards unhappy Norway, in not only sanctioning, but being instrumental in compelling, her subjection to a Power, towards which she had, from the earliest periods of her history, entertained the most unconquerable aversion, remains a solitary blot on the bright page of this part of our history; yet, since it was justified on the plea of its necessity for securing the success of that great cause, on the final triumph of which not only our own exist-



ence, but the liberation of the Continent depended, it did not materially affect our right to the distinction of being the deliverers of Europe, to which we were so justly entitled by all our other conduct.

So highly, indeed, was our character estimated on the European continent, that a promise of institutions, similar to those of England, was made by most of the allied Sovereigns, as the greatest blessing which they could confer upon their respective dominions, and as the strongest stimulus for their subjects to assist in the overthrow of the common foe; while, at the same time, the grant of a constitution, modelled after our own, was the peace-offering made by their recalled Monarch to the French, to reconcile that people to his restoration.

Nor, indeed, is it matter of surprise that a nation, which had made such extraordinary exertions for her own deliverance, and that of the world, should have been thought to possess some germ of strength, peculiar to itself, by which it had been enabled to perform such wonders for mankind. And one of the grounds of exultation to Mr. Canning at the conclusion of the war was, the prospect thus opened, that if nations moulded their institutions after those of England, the blessings of a liberal government would be diffused throughout the whole human race.

The confident hopes, therefore, of the whole Continent centred in the British representatives at the congress at Vienna, on the result of whose deliberations the future destinies of the world depended.

From the moderation professed by the Emperors of Russia and Austria, and the King of Prussia, much was not to be expected. They were already known to have appropriated to themselves the rightful possessions of others; and now they respectively contemplated some territory, which they wished to annex, or to secure to their dominions.

Great Britain alone remained untarnished by any attempt at unjust aggrandisement; moreover, there were no possessions which she coveted; and the question which she had to decide was not, what more she could acquire, but what, in her generosity, she would surrender.

After the unprecedented convulsions which Europe had suffered,—after the disorganisation and reconstruction of her Monarchies which had been effected by Napoleon,—it could not be doubted that the Congress must have had to settle many conflicting interests; and that in so doing it would have been impossible not to have done violence to the feelings or prejudices of some few countries: but what the people of Europe hoped was, that the ties which bound

them to the governments under which they had long lived happily would not be severed, for the mere interest or convenience of any favoured Monarch; or that, if that Monarch lost one million of subjects in one direction for the convenience of his Brother-Sovereign, he would not be indemnified in another, without at all regarding the happiness of those, who were thus to be made the means of indemnification.

Against the adoption of principles and arrangements such as these, the people of Europe fondly hoped, that, coming with all the renown of victories by sea and land, which she had gained in the war, but above all, coming with clean hands herself to the decision of questions so difficult, Great Britain would have had both the wish and the power to protect them. They trusted that if "the deliverance of Europe," the watch-word that had so often echoed in their ears, meant any thing, it meant not the deliverance alone from the oppressive dominion of Napoleon, but the deliverance from the unjustly acquired dominion of any Sovereign, whoever that Sovereign might happen to be.

It was, therefore, with feelings of unmixed alarm, that those countries, whose fate yet remained undecided, learnt that the act of the Congress, which first transpired, was, its determination to deprive the Genoese of their independence, and to make them over to their

ancient enemy, the King of Sardinia ; and, as if at once to blast the hopes of those who relied on England for protection, England was the very Power selected to carry into execution this most unjust, if not perfidious decree. What made the transaction more particularly unfortunate, as far as England was concerned, was, that many very able and unprejudiced men thought, that her faith and honour were pledged to the preservation of Genoese independence.

That this was not the case, was maintained, and perhaps successfully maintained, by the English ministry ; but the mere possibility that a doubt should be cast upon the integrity of Great Britain, however unjust the aspersion might have been, was certainly injurious to her credit, which had hitherto been placed beyond the reach of suspicion, or controversy.

This decision respecting Genoa was not compensated by the other arrangements of the Congress ; which arrangements neither enhanced the reputation of this country, nor increased her claims of gratitude from others. The avowed object which the noble Lord, who had the conduct of the negotiations at Vienna, had in view, was not to see justice done to the weaker states ; not to guard their independence, and to watch over their interests, thus securing the attachment of those whom he protected, and the respect likewise of those whom he resisted ; but it

was, as he did not scruple to declare, to effect “the re-establishment and re-organisation of those two great Monarchies, Austria and Prussia, which to all practical purposes had been destroyed during the war.” Every thing, accordingly, was made to yield to the accomplishment of this purpose. Venice, whom, after the treaty of Campo-Formio, Austria had deprived of independence, as a reward for having been faithful to her in the war preceding that treaty; but whom she subsequently had been compelled to cede to Napoleon, was again made over to Austria. More than half of Saxony, in spite of the protestations of its Sovereign, and the lamentations of its people, was granted to Prussia; and Poland was, for the third time, made the subject of partition between her original spoilers, although she was now, for the first time, so divided with the countenance and sanction of Great Britain. All this was done, as Lord Castlereagh stated in Parliament, for the sake of giving military positions, and “flanks and rears,” to Austria and Prussia; and thereby securing whatever settlement of Europe the Congress should finally adopt; as if the real security of a Government was to be found in fortresses and military positions, rather than in the attachment and fidelity of the people under its rule; and this in spite of the example so recently given in the downfall of Napoleon :

for it is very remarkable, that, so long as that wonderful man was supported by the feelings and opinions of the people, he was unconquerable, while the Monarchs who fought against him confirmed his power and lost their own. But when he had trampled upon national rights and predilections so far as to make the cause of his opponents the cause of the people, victory deserted his standard, and the tide of desolation was turned back, to devastate his own territories, and to involve him, and apparently his dynasty in irretrievable destruction. But these arrangements of Lord Castlereagh were the result of our successful interference in continental politicks; for the purpose of securing which, we on our part voluntarily consented to restore several valuable colonies which we had taken during the war!

One concession, however, which was obtained from the Congress, and for the obtaining of which our influence was exerted, must not be overlooked. Russia, Prussia, and Austria, in conjunction with Great Britain, declared, that, they "had each, in their respective dominions, prohibited their colonies and subjects from taking any part in the slave-trade; and they likewise engaged to concert together the most effectual measures for the entire and definitive abolition of that trade." It is certainly a consolation to find even this solitary resolution,

in the cause of humanity, adopted at the Congress; yet the declaration being only made by those of the continental Powers which had neither colonies nor slaves, the effects of the measure were by no means equal to its pretensions.

But though the principle of giving military positions to the different States of Europe, for their effectual defence against any attacks from those who might hereafter desire to disturb the settlement of the Continent, to be concluded at the Congress, was that by which Lord Castlereagh professed to be guided, it was one which was only partially maintained. The Power, which, beyond all comparison, Europe had most to dread, from the vastness of its territory, and the amount of its population, was Russia: so sensible of this, indeed, was Lord Castlereagh, that previously to Napoleon's return from Elba, he actually signed a treaty with France and Austria, binding Great Britain and those two Powers to unite in resistance to the ambitious designs of the northern potentate. Yet, notwithstanding these very wise alarms, and although, perhaps, the future safety of Europe depended on the erection of a strong barrier against Russia; although, too, the kingdom of Poland, if re-established, would have been that barrier, and, by insisting upon its restoration, England, had she succeeded, would have gained

not only a great political object for herself and the rest of Europe, but likewise immortal honour, while, if she failed, she would have been in no worse situation, and would have been spared the disgrace of consenting to its re-partition, still no attempts were made, or, if made, they were urged so feebly as to be disregarded, to apply towards Russia a principle so rigidly adopted, when weaker States were in question. Russia, therefore, (the Power *against* whom, rather than *for* whom, “flanks and rears” ought to have been provided,) was allowed to bear away the lion’s share of Poland; Austria and Prussia being content to suffer it, because they were admitted to be partakers in the spoil.

Neither was any effort made to restore the Finland provinces to Sweden, although these, if all Powers were to receive those territories which were most essential to their safety against foreign aggression, ought to have been ceded by the Czar: since they were at least as necessary to Sweden for security against Russia, as Genoa was to Italy, or to Sardinia, against France; with this difference, however, in the two cases, that while Sweden had the claim of ancient possession, and the plea of having been unjustly deprived of Finland by Russia, Sardinia had not the shadow of such a pretension on Genoa.

Had we, indeed, manifested an inflexible determination to act on the principle of making



each separate State strong in its own position, as the price of our consent to its adoption ; a principle which, however unjust in itself, yet, if strictly adhered to, presented at least the advantage of erecting strong barriers against the ambition of Russia, some excuse might have been made for our so doing ; but, as it was, we gave up the principle, in all cases where we should have been benefited by its application, while we incurred all the odium of enforcing it against the weak, when no adequate gain was likely to accrue from its enforcement.

But the real motives (if motives may be judged from actions) by which the British Plenipotentiaries were guided in their conduct at this Congress, was the desire of complying with the wishes, or the dread of thwarting the views, of the Sovereigns of Russia, Austria, and Prussia. Instead, therefore, either of adhering to the principles professed by us during the war, and taking our stand in determining to consent to nothing but what was just, we managed, by tamely consenting to acquiesce in whatever plans were suggested by the desires or convenience of those Sovereigns, and by thus manifesting our disregard for the happiness of the people, to lose the confidence and the general estimation of the world.

Whether this loss was balanced, or in any degree compensated, by an increased influence over the counsels of these Monarchs, or whether,

on the other hand, that influence was not diminished from the want of that feeling of respect which mankind will ever cherish for unbending integrity, can only be determined by a consideration of subsequent events.

The first important transaction that occurred, took place a few months after the treaties were signed, which thus at once sealed the doom of so many nations. It was the signature of another treaty by the monarchs of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, apparently of the most harmless nature; but which, however, was eventually productive of consequences scarcely less important than those effected by the treaties which formed the ostensible business of the Congress. This treaty, which was the foundation of the Holy Alliance, (at first, called the Sacred Alliance,) was a mutual pledge entered into by the Monarchs who signed it, not only to govern their own subjects according to the doctrines of Christianity, but to act towards other States with those feelings of charity and mutual forbearance which are so strongly enforced upon all mankind, throughout the whole of the sacred writings of the Evangelists.

As soon as the three Monarchs had affixed their autograph signatures to this treaty, the Prince Regent of England was invited to become a party to it. And so confident were its authors, either in the purity or in the obscurity

of their intentions, that the treaty was made publick as soon as signed. The Prince Regent, however, declined acceding to it, on account of the technical objection, that, since all treaties were signed by his ministers, he could not deviate from the established rule, by placing his sign-manual to this one in particular; and from the way in which it was panegyrised by Lord Castlereagh in the House of Commons, it would appear, that this was the real reason for the refusal. There were not, however, wanting Members of that House, whose foresight and discrimination led them to suspect, that the treaty meant more than was intended to meet the eye. That three Monarchs, absolute in their respective dominions, and free to act, both with regard to their own subjects and independent States, according to the dictates of their conscience, should think it necessary to bind themselves by a solemn compact to act up to the spirit of the religion which they professed, was, certainly, a very extraordinary and 'unexampled proceeding. It was not to be wondered at, therefore, that those who saw no signs of Christian morality, in the partition of their neighbours' territories, should think that some purposes were intended to be served by it, for the safe disclosure of which the time had not yet arrived.

The treaty was supposed to be the joint offering of the Emperor Alexander, and Prince

Metternich, but principally of the latter, who, no doubt, in this instance, well knew what he was about at the time that he framed it.

During the first three years after its signature, it produced no very remarkable consequences. But it must not be supposed, because its operation was not very evident to the British nation, that, therefore, its effects were not, during that time, sensibly felt upon the Continent.

The mode of conducting the internal administration of a country, since it comes home to the feelings of each individual belonging to it, is, necessarily, what principally attracts attention; and since that of this Kingdom is too much under the control of Parliament to admit of the introduction of any foreign influence, the mass of the people not being immediately affected by the line of foreign policy which may be pursued by the Government, do not feel the same concern respecting their external relations which the nations of the Continent feel, whose situation is more easily acted upon, by the good or bad governments established in the adjoining territories. As long as English commerce remains uninjured by the internal condition of a state, the English publick do not much disturb themselves with what that condition may be, unless, indeed, they are shocked by some dreadful instance of oppression on the part of the governors, or some insurrectionary

movements on the part of the governed. The great majority of this nation, therefore, were probably ignorant, or if not ignorant were indifferent, as to whether the promise of Constitutions, which had been made to the German states, in one of the articles in the act of federation \*, was fulfilled or not, though the fact that, with a few exceptions, that promise remained unperformed, was necessarily a matter of deep import to the German people. For the Emperor of the most powerful Monarchy amongst them, Austria, appeared to have no thought of redeeming his pledge; and the King of Prussia, who was committed, independently of the act of federation, to the fulfilment of its stipulations, seemed wholly to be employed in inventing excuses for delay. It is hardly to be supposed that this would have been the conduct of the Prussian Government, had it not felt conscious of some encouragement from without: and there can be no doubt, that the confidence with which the allied Monarchs relied upon each other for assistance, confirmed them in their determination, not to consent to the extension of popular privileges in their respective dominions. This disposition, however, to evade the performance of their engagements, on the part of two of the principal members of the Holy Alliance, coupled

\* Signed, shortly after the Peace, by the different German Sovereigns.

with the known countenance given to them by the other members of the League, excited great dissatisfaction throughout the whole of Germany, where the "war of liberation," as it was termed, against Napoleon, had given rise to ardent and, perhaps, extravagant notions of liberty, which, at the time they were engendered, were fostered by those very Sovereigns, who, when the danger had gone by, became most anxious for their extinction. The fanaticism of a German student, who assassinated an emissary of the Russian emperor, (who, as being a German, the student looked upon as a traitor to his country,) afforded the pretext for the establishment of what was called a central commission, authorised to prosecute inquiries in *all* parts of Germany concerning "demagogic intrigues." This measure was the first step towards the formation of a sort of European police, which shortly afterwards was matured into a regular system of espionage and restraint over those minor States, whose Governments happened to be more liberally disposed than those belonging to the Holy Alliance: the views of which Alliance, from not having thus far been thwarted, began to be more openly avowed. The Prussian Court, in a circular despatch, enclosing the decree of the Diet, erecting the above-mentioned Central Commission, by the way in which it talks of the people, clearly enough showed the light in which the members

of the Holy Alliance looked upon their subjects, and the manner in which they intended to treat them. — “ The Sovereigns cannot flatter themselves with being able to combat their *enemies* with success, unless they (the Sovereigns) are *united* in a profession of their principles, and in vigorous measures to defend them,” was the language of the Prussian minister. Now, the individuals thus designated as the enemies of the European Sovereigns, were all those who were of opinion that “ a national representation, calculated according to extent of territory and population,” would be a real amelioration in the construction of the Governments of their respective countries, and a wholesome check upon the power of their arbitrary rulers; and as those who held this opinion formed, beyond a doubt, at least three fourths of the population of Germany, it would appear from that minister’s own account, that these Monarchs reckoned in the list of their enemies the great majority of their own subjects. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that, the Monarchs being guided by such principles, discontent pretty generally prevailed, — a discontent, however, not confined to Germany, but existing equally in the countries under the Austrian yoke in Italy, who had no greater reason than those in Germany to be satisfied with their lot. For there was no species of cruel exaction and petty tyranny that was not practised by the Austrian emissaries

throughout Lombardy and the Venetian states, the inhabitants of which remembered, with useless regret, the blessings which they enjoyed whilst governed by Napoleon's viceroy.

This gloomy aspect of the political horizon, in the countries under the immediate dominion of the Holy Alliance, was not enlivened by any more cheering prospect on the western extremity of the European Continent. The conduct of the King of Spain, from the very instant that he crossed the frontiers of his kingdom, was one continued series of tyranny and ingratitude. Those who had exerted themselves the most in his behalf were the very persons selected for vengeance, and the dungeons of his prisons were filled with all the most distinguished defenders of their country. The first ordinance that he signed after his restoration abolished the Cortes; the second re-established the Inquisition; and of a piece with this commencement, was the whole tenour of his subsequent proceedings.

Accordingly (and naturally to be expected), the very first year of his return was marked by the discovery of one conspiracy, and the breaking out of two insurrections; and, notwithstanding that their authors were punished with the most unrelenting severity, their punishment did not prevent others from being stimulated by the same causes to attempt similar enterprises. In-



deed, the domestic history of Spain, from 1814 to 1819, presents few things worthy of notice, except the details of unsuccessful rebellions, and the persecutions consequent upon their failure : although other effects, equally calamitous, were produced by Ferdinand's system of misgovernment, which evinced themselves in the general impoverishment of the Nation, and the utter ruin of the finances.

The total want of confidence in the Spanish Government that every where prevailed, and the arbitrary fiscal regulations which were adopted, regulations constantly repealed by the enactment of others equally arbitrary, were ill calculated to restore Spain to prosperity, already exhausted as she was by a destructive war, carried on for so long a time in the very heart of her richest provinces. Meanwhile her Colonies were taking advantage of the weakness of the Mother Country gradually to effect the establishment of their independence ; while the cessation of all intercourse between them did not lessen the embarrassments of the latter, which were much increased by the attempts made for the re-subjugation of the revolted territories, heretofore the main source of the strength and greatness of the Spanish empire. „

It was not without the greatest sorrow and indignation that Great Britain beheld a people with whom she had fought side by side, in de-

fence of their common liberties, thus reduced to a state of impotency and degradation. The fact, however, that no inconsiderable portion of the nation preferred an absolute King to a limited Monarchy, proved, as it was, by Ferdinand's being able to maintain himself, did not tend to exalt the Spanish character in British estimation, while it made many look with a favourable eye on the struggles of the Spanish Colonies to emancipate themselves from the yoke of such a Mother Country. But if the generous sympathy of the English people alone led them to wish success to the Spanish Colonies, in the task which they had undertaken, there was yet another cause for the same wish to be found in the importance of that success to the continuance of an immense commerce, which, in the course of a few years, had sprung up between these countries and England. While Spanish America had been completely under the dominion of Old Spain, all trade with any other country was scrupulously forbidden. But at the time that Ferdinand was kidnapped by Napoleon, the colonists, confused by conflicting accounts as to what really was the legitimate government in Spain to which they owed allegiance, began to act for themselves ; and one of the first measures of the people was, to break the shackles that the selfish policy of the Mother Country had imposed upon their trade. So tempting an opportunity

for speculation would not have been likely, at any time, to have been neglected by Great Britain; but coming, as it did, at a time when Napoleon's decrees had, in a great measure, excluded her merchandise from the Continent, it was seized upon with an eager delight, which was rather increased than diminished, in proportion as the value of it became known. Hence all who were engaged in this trade dreaded lest the success of Old Spain should bring back the ancient system of monopoly, and that they should be again excluded from a direct intercourse with the rich markets of the New World.

These concurrent circumstances, which created an almost unanimous wish in England that the independent cause might prosper, led many officers on half pay, and disbanded soldiers, to enlist themselves under the banners of the colonists, and to such a length was this practice carried, that armaments even against Spain herself, paid for by private individuals, were actually being fitted out in many of the ports of the United Kingdom. This state of things naturally produced remonstrances from the Spanish Government; and to remedy the evil, a bill was brought into parliament by the ministers, called the Foreign Enlistment Bill, to put a stop to such proceedings. A bill of such a nature was, at this crisis, peculiarly unpopular; and since, from want of being fairly considered, it was thought

to be a part of the same kind of support, given by our Government to the principles of legitimacy, maintained by the Holy Alliance, it gave general dissatisfaction both at home and abroad. At the time that this bill was introduced, Mr. Canning was a member of the administration. He spoke zealously in its support, and justified it on the broad ground, that fair dealing towards Spain demanded its adoption ; for he preferred that we should act justly towards our ally, even though, in so acting, we might do that which would be detrimental to ourselves. Mr. Canning, indeed, would have thus decided, whatever consequences might result, believing integrity and good faith to be the foundations of political strength ; but in this particular case, he contended that an opposite course would add folly to injustice, since it would not only incur the odium consequent upon a deed of bad faith, but would actually help to defeat the very end which it was intended to promote. Spain was, he was well convinced, in too distracted and weak a condition to be able to make any effectual exertions for the recovery of her lost dominions ; and he felt tolerably confident, that the time was not far distant when the colonists would have established their *de facto* independence. As soon as that event should be brought about, the natural time would have arrived for Great Britain to enter into some definite relations with them. But with

what injustice towards Spain should we have done so, if the success of the colonists had been the consequence of the assistance given to them by British expeditions, fitted out in British ports, to prevent which the Government, possessing no power, had refused to take measures for its acquirement?

What answer could we have made to the complaints of Spain for the non-fulfilment of our treaty, by which we were bound not to assist the Colonies, had every British port been allowed to be a place where that treaty might be violated with impunity? and with what face could we have taken advantage of the *de facto* independence of the Colonies, to recognise their separate existence, had that *de facto* independence been effected by the tacit connivance of the British Government, instead of being the result of their own exertions? Unless we were prepared to throw aside all claims to uprightness of conduct, we never could, had such been the case, however serious the inconvenience, have recognised their independence, until Spain herself had set the example.

It was these considerations that made Mr. Canning declare his conviction, that if Parliament denied to the executive Government the power of “ maintaining neutrality, instead of accelerating, they would retard the period of a stable “ and permanent connexion between this country

“and Spanish America.” How abundantly the truth of this proposition was borne out by the event, is shown by the fact, that a great part of our justification to Spain, when we did recognise the independence of her Colonies, turned upon the very circumstance of the passing of this bill.

Its enactment, however, neither improved the internal condition of Spain, nor enabled her to reconquer her colonies.

The condition of the adjoining kingdom of Portugal, though in many respects much better than that of its neighbour, was still extremely critical.

The continued absence of the court, and the erection of Brazil into a kingdom, had made Portugal, though nominally the parent state, in reality little better than an appendage of her ancient colony; a relative situation which ill accorded with the pride or interests of the Portuguese. Amongst them, as well as amongst the inhabitants of the Spanish portion of the Peninsula, there were many of the best and wisest who looked to a constitutional Government as the best panacea for the evils which afflicted them; and at the close of the year 1819, there appeared to those, who watched the feelings of the people, evident symptoms of an approaching crisis.

To this almost universal state of dislike of the people to the forms of their governments throughout the European Continent, France af-

forded a remarkable exception. Whatever distaste the French entertained towards their government, it was not directed against the form of their Constitution, but against the individuals in whose hands the administration was vested; a distaste which not unnaturally arose from the reflection, that the dynasty which was seated on their throne was not seated there by their own choice, but was forced upon them by the bayonets of hostile armies. True it was that the foreign armies, which had replaced, and by their presence maintained, the crown on the brows of the Bourbons, had, at the end of three years, been withdrawn from the French territory; but the recollection of these transactions still rankled in the hearts of many, and did not render them very kindly disposed towards those for whose sake the indignity was offered. Still there existed amongst the people a powerful body, who, though little friendly to the Bourbons, yet retained so lively a sense of the miseries that they had experienced from internal commotions, and foreign invasions, that they would have thought the expulsion of that family dearly purchased with the risk of again bringing down either of those misfortunes on the country. Others, also, there were, who wisely felt that they had at last obtained, what they never had acquired before, a real representation of the people, the permanency of which might have

been endangered by any change of government, or by any unsuccessful resistance to the one which was established.

While they were in possession of that blessing, they felt that the people had a strong hold upon the government, whereby they would be effectually protected from any great oppression, and which hold, if not loosened, would, in process of time, secure to them, in a legitimate way, all the rights and liberties which constitute the happiness of a free and enlightened nation.

Many things there undoubtedly were, in the conduct of the government, in which there was ample room for amelioration ; but still they could not but be sensible of their good fortune, in having come out of their late convulsions with the establishment of a Constitution. If, therefore, there were a majority of the French people who entertained feelings of dislike to the reigning Family, and who wished for their expulsion, by far the greater part of that majority would have been unwilling to run the hazard of the miseries that might have ensued from any attempts to give effect to their wishes. Upon the whole, therefore, the Throne of the Bourbons was as likely to be permanent, as that of any other of the Continental Sovereigns, provided only that they did not violate the charter which the head of their House had granted.

The conduct of Louis XVIII., after his re-



storation, was, in general, wise and prudent. Still there were many circumstances which occurred during his reign, that gave rise to distrust and dissatisfaction ; and few, perhaps, more than his friendly disposition towards the Holy Alliance, the proof of which is to be found in his having procured an election law to be passed unfavourable to the fair representation of the people, which law was well known to be the offspring of the Aix-la-Chapelle Congress.

Of the actual condition and sentiments of the inhabitants of Russia, living, as they do, under an absolute monarch, who forbids the expression of their sentiments, and prevents their being made known through the medium of the press, it is difficult to form any correct judgment, unless some extraordinary event arises, which proclaims, in a way not to be misunderstood, the real feelings of the nation. That event was to be found in the conspiracy which burst forth on the accession of the Emperor Nicholas to the throne, in which there was hardly a noble family in Russia of which some member was not implicated ; and which clearly showed, as its objects were in reality the establishment of a more popular form of government, and not the placing of Constantine on the throne, that even in that country, whose soil is thought peculiarly congenial to despotism, and where the monarch had really used his powers in a great degree for the

benefit of his people, there were a very large portion who sighed for popular privileges, and were ill pleased with the existing nature of their government.

The Holy Alliance being thus the object of the dislike, not to say the hatred, of the people of the several Nations either directly under its sway, or indirectly under its influence, it is not to be wondered at, that England, who only appeared as the aider and abetter of that alliance, was no longer held in the same estimation in which she was regarded during the time of Napoleon, when she always stood forth as the friend of the oppressed.

This was the state of things in Europe at the close of 1819, and beginning of the following year, in the course of which the Holy Alliance was startled by the breaking out of three several revolutions. The first occurred in Spain, and was begun by the army, which, ill clothed, ill-fed, and worse paid, mutinied to prevent being embarked for Spanish America, on board a fleet composed of ships that were esteemed not seaworthy for so long a voyage. Although the circumstances which enabled the leaders of this army to excite a spirit of disaffection among the soldiery, and to proclaim a Constitution, were not connected with any abstract love of liberty, but are chiefly to be traced to the state of destitution and privation under which the troops

laboured — causes of themselves sufficient to produce disobedience in any army where they exist — yet the universal misery and degradation which Ferdinand's government had occasioned from one end of the Peninsula to the other, soon caused corresponding movements to take place in different parts of the Kingdom. In the northern province of Galicia, and the south-eastern one of Catalonia, the news of the events of the Isle of Léon were received with the most unbounded joy ; and the populace joined with the military stationed at Corunna and Barcelona in following the example thus set them, which, since it was given by the army, the defence on which arbitrary Governments generally rely, afforded a more certain prospect of ultimate success, attended with less hazard and danger, than any attempt to overthrow the existing Government which had hitherto been made.

Accordingly, we find that the time, from the proclamation of the Constitution by the army before Cadiz, to its acceptance by Ferdinand at Madrid, amounted to little more than two short months.

The progress of the Neapolitan revolution was still more rapid than that of Spain : it commenced with the militia on the 2d of July, at Nola ; and the new Constitution was accepted by the King on the 6th of the same month at Naples. It must be allowed, that there were by no means

the same excuses for this forcible alteration of the government of Ferdinand of Naples that there were for that of his kinsman and namesake of Spain. For the administration of the former, unlike that of the latter, was in many respects wise and liberal, and his people enjoyed, perhaps, greater freedom than they had ever before possessed ; yet the abolition of the constitutional form of Government in Sicily, and the non-fulfilment of the King's assurance, that he would grant them a Constitution, were so great a disappointment to their hopes, that although they did not labour under any arbitrary laws or unredressed grievances, yet they seized the first opportunity that offered to extort from him the performance of his promise.

The scene of the third, for a time, successful attempt to establish a representative form of government was, Portugal ; where, as has been already shown, there were ample grounds for dissatisfaction with the established order of things. Unfortunately in this case, as in the two preceding ones, the attempt at change was begun by the military, and though it is not a matter of wonder, that the armed force of a country, by whose fidelity even an odious tyranny may be preserved against the wishes of the people, should possess more confidence for an undertaking of this nature than the people ; who, if that armed force were faithful to the govern-

ment, would be almost sure to fail in any revolutionary enterprise ; yet it was attempted to be argued, notwithstanding that the acts of the soldiers were adopted and seconded with enthusiasm by large portions of their fellow-subjects, that the changes made in Spain, Naples, and Portugal, were those of a licentious soldiery, and were not in consonance with the general desires of the country. Certainly if, on these occasions, such were the case, it would be vain to search the page of history for their parallels. Teeming as it does with accounts of rulers being dethroned, to make way for others, by the armies under their command, it may safely be affirmed that there is no one instance on record, where an army, naturally, as it is, the ally and instrument of despotism, incurred the guilt of rebellion, in defence of the liberties of the people, unless in unison with the disposition of the majority of those for whose sake they acted.

The constitution was first proclaimed at Oporto on the 23d of August, and a junta at the same time was established in that city. Similar movements took place at Lisbon, in spite of the efforts of the Regency, shortly after those which had occurred at Oporto became known there ; and on the 1st of October, the two juntas being consolidated, entered the Capital in triumph, and were installed in their new office, the Regency having resigned its functions.

The news of these three events following so quickly one upon the other, struck terror and dismay into the hearts of the Sovereigns composing the Holy Alliance. They were well aware, that having no good grounds to rely upon the affection of their subjects, it was impossible to foresee how soon they might be placed in a similar predicament. The Emperor of Austria, in particular, had especial reason for alarm, as well on account of the vicinity of his Italian provinces to one of the scenes of action, as because he well knew, that those provinces, from the very intolerable nature of His government, must be ripe for revolt against it.

Instead, however, of these events inducing them to redeem their pledges by showing some disposition to consult the happiness of their subjects, by granting what they themselves had held out as inducements for exertion in the time of danger, and which would have been the best safeguard against popular re-action, their first object was to try, whether, by union and decision, they could not at once put down these incipient struggles of the people to ameliorate their condition.

With this object a Congress was immediately summoned to be held at Tröppau, of the three allied Monarchs, at which the British and French ministers were invited to be present ; not, however, to take part in its deliberations, for, from

so doing, they were carefully excluded, but, as Lord Castlereagh very ingenuously stated, to perform the office of rendering to their respective courts an accurate account of the nature of those deliberations. But though the discharge of a duty, so much beneath the dignity of the countries that they represented, was nominally the object for which their presence was requested, the real purpose that those who thus invited them evidently had in view was, by the countenance which their presence gave to the proceedings, to deceive the world into the belief, that whatever unjustifiable attacks on freedom this Congress might propose to make, they would not be made without the consent and sanction of the governments of France and England. A circular despatch \* to the diplomatic agents of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, promulgated to mankind the nature of the labours of the Congress. “ *The desire to maintain peace*, and to free Europe from the “ scourge of revolution,” determined the three powers forthwith to proceed *to destroy by force of arms* the free institutions which the Neapolitan nation had asked and obtained from their Sovereign. But in assigning the reasons for the selection of Naples in preference to either Spain or Portugal, as the object of their interference,

\* Of the 8th Dec. 1821.

the intention to act in the same way, as soon as possible, towards those two countries, was clearly manifested. The constitutional government of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies was to be "first overthrown," as, they said, "it daily took more root, and as no other could be so immediately and so speedily opposed;" — a course of argument which evidently implied, that that government was not thus selected on account of any more aggravating circumstances, as compared with others, connected with its establishment, or its subsequent behaviour; but because, being both weak and close at hand, it therefore could be annihilated with a greater degree of certainty and quickness. •

It was evident, therefore, that the disposition to upset the other Constitutional Governments was not wanting, and that, as soon as the opportunity offered, it would not be allowed to pass by unheeded.

The undisguised avowal of principles and intentions such as these would be sufficient to prove, if all other proof were wanting, either that the Holy Alliance, from having been always encouraged and never thwarted in their proceedings, no longer felt it necessary to throw any disguise over their projects, or else, that they were well aware that these projects were not disagreeable to the English Cabinet; but so convinced were they of the truth of this last-



mentioned fact, that in the very same document in which doctrines so hostile to liberty, and “repugnant to the fundamental laws of this “country” were propounded, a firm belief is expressed, that France and *England* would give them their concurrence, and, as the necessary consequence of such concurrence, would join with them in the attack on Naples.

By some lucky chance, the existence of this document became known to the publick, by means of an incorrect copy which found its way into a German newspaper. Whether it was in consequence of this disclosure that Lord Castlereagh judged it necessary to protest against the assumption of England’s approbation to doctrines, so hostile to her own institutions, or whether he had previously determined to do so, it is impossible to say. Certain, however, it is, that no notice was taken of the Circular till after it had been more than a month in possession of the Foreign Secretary. This fact is the more remarkable from the consideration, that even if the name of England had not been thus made use of, it would have been the paramount duty of an English minister not to have permitted such doctrines to be published without at once declaring his dissent from them.

Equally would it have been his bounden duty to have protested against them, when made the rule of action by the allies, even if they had

not been embodied in this circular despatch. Acquainted he must have been with their adoption, if the British agent at Troppau in any way performed the duties which he was expressly sent to fulfil, viz. keeping Lord Castlereagh informed of the proceedings of the Congress.

Long, therefore, before the circular despatch in question was sent forth, his Lordship must have been aware that principles, according to his own admission, "in direct repugnance to "the fundamental laws of this kingdom, and such "as could not be safely admitted as the foundation of a system of international law," were the principles which the Congress were about to make the foundation of all their measures. But still, notwithstanding this knowledge, he made no remonstrances against them; and when at last they are forced upon his observation by a written communication, he begins his circular reply to that communication, by deliberately declaring, that had it not been made, he should have thought it "unnecessary to have offered "any remarks whatever upon the nature of the "discussions which had occurred at Troppau." The answer, however, was in some respects worthy of a British Minister—since it condemned in strong and energetic language the most preposterous of the doctrines of the Alliance. Had, indeed, the opinions expressed in it been avowed at so early a period as would have proved them

to have been a spontaneous declaration of genuine sentiment, instead of by the very tardiness with which they were circulated exposing them to the suspicion *that* they were merely a sop, as it were, thrown down to pacify the rising indignation of the British Parliament and Nation, — and above all, had there not been to be found amongst them a saving clause of justification for Austria in her meditated attack on Naples, then there would have been no reason to complain of this document; and then, in all probability, it would have produced a more powerful effect upon the allied Sovereigns.

But so far was this despatch of Lord Castlereagh's from causing any alteration in the tone of these Monarchs, that we still find them, little more than three months afterwards, asserting the same doctrines thus condemned by the British Minister, in a still more positive and undaunted manner. “ To preserve what is legally established, was, as it ought to be, the invariable principle of their policy. Useful or necessary changes in legislation, and in the administration of states, ought only to emanate from the free will, and the intelligent, and well-weighed conviction of those *whom God has rendered* responsible for power,” — are sentences to be found in documents denouncing nothing but a fixed determination on the part of the Holy

Alliance to put down all political improvement that should originate with the people.

It was not, perhaps, to be wondered at, that the allied Sovereigns should thus set at nought Lord Castlereagh's condemnation of the principles by which they were guided, by again insultingly repeating their fixed purpose to adhere to them, when it is considered that he took such anxious pains to make an exception in their favour, in the only instance in which a practical application was about to be made of them.

The Congress at Troppau having invited His Sicilian Majesty to repair to Laybach, to which place they were about to adjourn, the King, with the consent of his parliament, accepted the invitation, and proceeded in a British Man-of-War to the place of meeting. Whether when he quitted Naples he had determined to play false or not, it is impossible to decide with certainty, but his exertions in defence of the institutions which he had sworn to adopt and support, were, to say the least, of a very faint description.

As soon as the resolution of the allied Monarchs to intermeddle in the internal concerns of his Kingdom was made known to him, he, at once, without a struggle, yielded to their views, and wrote a letter to his son, whom he had left Regent in his absence, to endeavour to persuade

him to induce the supporters of the Constitution at once to consent to its demolition.

The Regent, however, and the parliament, remained firm, and rejected the proffered counsel.

On the 4th of February the Austrian troops began their march for the southern extremity of the Italian Peninsula.

The results of that expedition are too well known to require here to be detailed. The raw recruits which formed the greater portion of the Neapolitan armies, proverbially none of the bravest, made little or no resistance to the disciplined troops of the invaders; and the aged Monarch re-entered his capital on the 5th of May, with all the guilt upon his head of being an accessory to the introduction of hostile armies into his own dominions.

Before, however, the success of this enterprise was certain, a revolution, similar in almost every respect to that of Naples, broke out in Piedmont, and was attended with the same temporary success. But the rapid progress of the Austrian arms against the Constitutionalists in the South was necessarily unfavourable to the cause of those who advocated similar principles in the North of Italy. The power of the constitutional government in Piedmont had not even a month's duration. For as soon as the occurrences at Turin became known at Laybach, Austria set her troops in motion to restore by force of arms

the ancient order of things; and Russia gave orders for the march of an army of 100,000 men to the south of Europe, in case the Austrian troops should prove insufficient for their task. As soon, however, as they had accomplished it, the Russian army was ordered to retire. Not so the Austrian troops, large bodies of which were stationed in the Neapolitan and Piedmontese territories to prevent the possibility of a re-action.

The allied Sovereigns having thus completely succeeded in their views on Italy, broke up the Congress at Laybach on the 13th of May. In the furtherance of these views they had found in the French Monarch a willing coadjutor, and in the English minister any thing but a formidable opponent. The latter, as has been seen, condemned their principles in the abstract, while he admitted that their special application to Naples might be justifiable. The former not only abstained from such condemnation, but, on the contrary, so cordially consented to co-operate in their execution, that Louis himself actually addressed a letter to his brother Sovereign at Naples, to persuade him to comply with the summons or invitation which had been sent to him to appear in person before the assembled Congress.

While these transactions were being enacted in Italy, events of scarcely less importance were

taking place in Portugal and Spain. To the former country its King had unexpectedly returned. A revolution similar to the four already mentioned having taken place at Rio de Janeiro, His Most Faithful Majesty, thinking that he should be safer in his European than in his Trans-atlantic dominions, determined to leave Brazil, appointing his eldest son, Don Pedro, to act as Regent. His Majesty arrived in the Tagus on the 4th of July, and having sworn to accept the Constitution, was received with acclamations in Lisbon.

In Spain the state of things was far from being satisfactory to the true lovers of liberty. The rigour with which the popular party had been treated by Ferdinand, during the time that the absolute party were dominant, produced a proportionate degree of violence when that party, heretofore the oppressed, in their turn, were in power. It is more, therefore, a matter of regret than of surprise that, Ferdinand having been supported by the priests in all his odious tyrannical measures, the priests were the first to suffer from the vengeance of the Cortes.

The not unnatural reasoning adopted by that Body was, that the best security against the monkish party's ever again prevailing in the state would be to deprive them at once of their revenues, and (as it was thought) consequently of their influence. But though the general pro-

position that wealth is a source of power and influence is one, the truth of which cannot be denied, yet it does not follow, as a necessary consequence of that proposition, that power and influence cannot exist without wealth; neither that an abstraction of wealth must necessarily be immediately followed by a diminution of influence.

In the present instance, for example, the measure decided upon by the Cortes of confiscating the revenues of the Church did not diminish the authority of the Clergy.

The lower orders in Spain, prone to superstition, beheld with disgust those whom they were accustomed to reverence treated with contumely and injustice. Fond of idleness, and, if disposed to indulge in it, sure of finding support from the rich monasteries in their neighbourhood, they saw themselves, with sorrow, suddenly deprived of a mode of subsistence to which long habit had attached them.

If their priest was dear to them when he made them partakers of his prosperity, he was not the less so, because from the very fact of his destitution they were necessarily sharers in his adversity.

The Cortes, therefore, by this ill-judged law contrived, in the very outset of their proceedings, to alienate from them the affections of a very large body of the people, — an error the



most fatal which a government, depending for its stability, as the Spanish government then did, solely on public opinion, could possibly commit.

Had the priests been allowed to retain their revenues they would not necessarily have been the enemies of the Constitution; neither would those dependent on them have become so. Whereas the suppression of the monasteries made all who had been benefited by them interested in the destruction of that government by which they were suppressed.

But if the measure were unwise, on account of the peculiar habits and predilections of the Spanish peasantry, it must not be forgotten that it was likewise impolitick in a general point of view.

The security of all property is more or less endangered by the invasion of any particular species of it; and such violations are sure to excite in the hearts of all who possess any property a distrust of the offending party. The measure, therefore, while it created a host of immediate enemies amongst those who directly suffered by it, likewise excited a feeling of alarm amongst others who could not but be sensible of its injustice.

Ferdinand, indeed, had hardly given to the decree his royal consent, which he did with great reluctance, before bands of the country people both in Andalusia and Gallicia armed them-

selves to oppose its execution, and to defend, as they thought, the cause of religion. It is true, that the populace of some of the great towns tried to anticipate the effects of the law; and, by themselves pillaging the convents, to snatch the prize from the government, whose design it was to make the riches of those establishments minister to the public necessities. But no decided inference as to the state of popular feeling can be drawn from this last-mentioned circumstance, for probably the idea of pillaging would never have occurred had not the government first set the example; and it ought to be attributed more to a desire of plunder than to any particular hatred of the persons to be plundered. The Government may be said, therefore, hardly to have gained a single friend by this measure, whilst it created to itself innumerable enemies, whose persevering hostility is proved by the long period that several of the Spanish provinces were kept in agitation by bands of armed peasants devoted to, and in some instances headed by, the priests.

Neither were the revenues benefited to any great degree by this act of injustice. And the financial difficulties of the Cortes, to the very last hour of their existence, were on the increase rather than on the wane.

That body, therefore, in decreeing the suppression of convents, evidently, to say the least

*of it, mistook their real interests, while the course of some of the events at Madrid, over which they ought to have had a more efficient control, was any thing but a counterbalance to the mischiefs arising from this false step. Many disgraceful scenes were acted in that capital, which unluckily bore a sufficiently close resemblance to those of the French Revolution to enable the enemies of the Cortes to represent the circumstances which attended the change in the Spanish Government as in every respect similar in character to those of that tremendous convulsion, in the progress of which such fearful evils were inflicted not only upon France but upon Europe.*

The object of those who instituted this parallel could not be mistaken. They wished to show that the same evils were then threatened, and thereby to vindicate the propriety, or indeed, by implication, to suggest the necessity of an attack being made from without on the newly established Constitution of Spain. But if there were, as undoubtedly there were, some circumstances which justified the comparison, there were not wanting others of greater magnitude and importance which marked the difference between them. And, first, it should be remembered, that such was the fierce hatred to Monarchy in France, that notwithstanding the many personal virtues which adorned the Sovereign, they were unable to protect him from the most insulting treatment,

or to save him from an ignominious death ; while in Spain, although the vices of the monarch were unredeemed by a single virtue, such was the respect with which his sacred office was treated, that he met with no indignities, and was allowed to wear the Crown which he had disgraced.

True, indeed, it was to have been wished, that a greater share of real authority had been left to the Kingly Office, to have maintained more equally the balance of the Constitution, yet was it to be wondered at that he, who had abused so grossly his power whilst he held it, should be entrusted with as small a portion of it as possible by those who had suffered so severely from its abuse ?

But, even if this glaring point of distinction had not existed, there would yet have been wanting that one all-sufficient ground for interference, by which the war, in 1793, with France, however, could alone have been defended. The French revolutionary government, by their celebrated decree, declared war against all established Governments, while that of Spain, so far from doing any thing of the sort, scrupulously abstained from all external aggression.

The French Ministry, in the early period of the existence of the Spanish constitutional Government, did not venture to avow towards it any open hostility, but the awful visitation of the

yellow fever, in its most pestilential form, with which it pleased Providence to afflict Spain, furnished the French Government with a pretext for the commencement of a series of measures, which, as is well known, ended in the subversion of her infant Constitution.

Under the pretence, or, perhaps, really for the purpose of guarding the French territory from infection, an army was encamped on the confines of France, next to Spain, designated by the name of the "Cordon Sanitaire." As long, however, as there was any dread of contagion, such a precaution on the part of the French Government could hardly have been matter of surprise; but it was matter both of surprise and suspicion that, after it had performed its duties, and the fear of the pestilence was gone by, that the army, instead of being quietly withdrawn, should still continue stationed upon the same spot, though under another name. It was then affirmed by the French government, that they found it necessary to keep up an "army of observation," to defend their territories from the encroachments to which they were exposed, in consequence of the civil war which then desolated the frontier provinces of Spain; and something was likewise whispered about the utility of keeping out that moral infection, which it was pretended the Spanish Constitutionals might communicate to the French people.

Had it not been for the absolute denial of any hostile intention on the part of the French Government towards Spain, fears might have been justly entertained for the ultimate destination of this army; but when a declaration of pacifick policy was ostentatiously and unnecessarily put into the mouth of the King at the close of the session of the Legislative Chambers, it was hardly to be supposed that the pious descendant of St. Louis would have lent himself, even for state purposes, to the gratuitous assertion of what he knew to be false. But whatever might be the assurances of the French Monarch, it was impossible not to fear but that the presence of such an army on the Bidassoa would be a cause of umbrage to the Spanish Government.

The weakness, however, of Spain, together with the general disorganization that every where prevailed, and the yet tottering state of her Government, was, to a certain degree, a security that she would not wantonly provoke her stronger neighbour; as well as that she would patiently submit to what she had an undoubted right to remonstrate against, rather than incur the risk of affording any plausible grounds of quarrel. But though these considerations on the part of Spain would evidently operate to prevent her seeking a rupture, and though the disavowal by France of any hostile

object, in maintaining this "army of observation," might have been sufficient to dispel the fears of those who dreaded the breaking out of a war between the two Powers, yet it was impossible to feel quite confident that that dreaded event would not very shortly take place, when the principles of eternal hostility to all popular institutions, promulgated by the Holy Alliance at Troppau and Laybach, were taken, as they could not but be taken, into consideration.

The fact likewise before noticed, of Naples being described as the "first" object selected for attack, too surely implied, that, as soon as the occasion was ripe, a second selection would be made; and as at the time this threat was held out the events in Piedmont had not occurred, it was evident that, as a second, at least, was intended, that second could be no other than Spain. It was therefore very natural to suppose that France would be made the instrument of the Alliance to overthrow the Spanish Constitution, while the ticklish state of the existing relations between the two Countries might easily be made to afford some plausible pretext for the attempt.

This conjecture was further strengthened by the consideration, "that the complete success which attended the first efforts of the Alliance against constitutional liberty was only likely to add to their confidence and to increase their

appetite for similar exploits ; and the announcement, before the Congress separated, of its intention to meet again the following year, only served to confirm the belief that, when they did meet, some scheme for the subversion of the Spanish Constitution would form the subject of their deliberations. \*

But it was not only the unsettled state of things between France and Spain that gave rise to apprehensions as to the probable duration of the peace then existing amongst the great Powers of Europe ; actual conflicts desolated various parts of the world : in Greece the Rayah subjects of the Porte were fighting in a manner worthy of their ancient name, against their Infidel Masters. In Spanish America the patriots were making rapid strides towards the establishment of their independence ; but still the struggle continued : — and Brazil, in the course of the

\* A singular proof was given at this time of the little deference the Emperor of Russia, the chief of the Alliance, thought necessary to maintain towards the feelings, or even towards the rights of England, in the publication of an Imperial Ukase, forbidding all foreign vessels to trade, fish, or settle, or to approach within one hundred Italian miles of the N. W. coast of America from Behring's Straits to the 51st degree of latitude. It will hardly be believed, that actually within the forbidden district, which, forsooth, we were not to be allowed to approach within one hundred miles, there were, and are, divers English settlements which carry on a lucrative trade with the Mother Country.



summer of 1822, had followed their example, in declaring itself independent of Portugal. Moreover, in those countries where tranquillity prevailed, it was the result of fear, and not of contentment. The elements of combustion existed. A spark was only wanting to set them in a blaze. And it must not be supposed, because that spark has not yet fallen, that the danger is gone by, and that a general convulsion may not yet be the consequence of the policy pursued by the Continental Governments.

Amidst this complication of affairs, and jarring of opposite principles, the three Sovereigns of the Holy Alliance, and the Representatives of France and England, were again about to meet in Congress at Vienna.

As the power of this celebrated Alliance for the six months preceding this Congress was greater than at any previous or subsequent period of its existence, it may be well here to examine the causes by which it had been gradually enabled to acquire a strength, which used, as the Alliance seemed determined to use it, threatened at least the temporary suspension of the liberties of the civilised World.

It will be remembered, that this Alliance was first formed about three months after the breaking up of the first Congress at Vienna; but couched as the convention, by which it was held together, was, in religious language, it was dif-

ficult for any of the uninitiated to discover its real object; yet still there was something in it of so suspicious a nature, although concealed by terms of the purest piety, that some members of the House of Commons brought the subject of it before Parliament; and that the then British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs declared his conviction that its stipulations were innocent, and its end harmless. That those, however, who framed it, meant that it should work, as it subsequently did work, is evident from the different compacts which the treaty contains : —

“ The three contracting monarchs will remain “ united by the bonds of a true and indissoluble “ fraternity,” says its first article ; “ and considering each other as fellow-countrymen, *they* “ *will on all occasions, and in all places, lend each* “ *other aid and assistance.*”

In the second article they declare, that they, the three allied Sovereigns, “ look upon themselves as merely delegated by Providence to “ govern,” &c.

That this expression in the second article meant no other than to assert the long-combated doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings, — and that the agreement in the first article “ to lend each “ other on all occasions, and in all places, aid and “ assistance,” — was an agreement binding each other mutually to support that Divine Right,

cannot now be doubted. It is easy to understand an enigma after it is explained, though not so easy to solve it before-hand. And though certainly the very fact of an enigma being propounded by the three sovereigns ought to have aroused *the suspicion* of an English minister, yet it was not to be expected that he should at once be able to discover the solution. But Lord Castlereagh not only did not find out the solution, but allowed himself to be deceived into the belief, by the frank and open manner in which the treaty was published to the world, that there was nothing in it, either obscure or enigmatick, forgetting, when he so reasoned, that it was not the riddle, but the answer to it, of which prudence would dictate the concealment.

But, again, the Prince Regent of England was invited to become a party to the treaty, and would the Allies, if they had had, when they framed it, any sinister objects in view, would they have invited England to become one of their party? Now, this treaty, it must be observed, was concluded three months after the treaties that were signed at Vienna, to which England *was* a party. Did those treaties consult the convenience of Kings, or were they framed with a due consideration to the rights and happiness of subjects? It is impossible to affirm the latter, while it is equally impossible to deny the former. What then was there extraor-

dinary in the three Monarchs expecting England to join in this treaty, merely intended to perpetuate the same principles, which had been their guide at the Vienna Congress? Besides, they were well aware, that if England chose to set her face against such principles, it would be impossible for them long to maintain their ground. If, therefore, Lord Castlereagh had penetrated the objects of the treaty, they had no reason to imagine that those objects would have been adverse to his own; if, on the other hand, he had not that penetration, no harm could result from the invitation. In justice to Lord Castlereagh, it can only be believed that they remained wholly and entirely hidden from his view; for it is really out of the question to suppose that a British Minister could have lauded that treaty as he did, if he had suspected the real purpose for which it had been framed.

For the first few years after its signature, the only apparent effect that it produced was that of encouraging the two German members of it to delay the performance of their promise, viz. the granting of a system of popular representation to their subjects.

At Aix-la-Chapelle, when France was restored to the rank of an independent Power by the withdrawal of the allied armies, the Holy Alliance acquired increased strength by the

continued and voluntarily sanction and adhesion of her King to the treaty which united them.

From the Congress at Aix-la-Chapelle to the period when the constitutional governments were formed in Spain, Portugal, and Naples, this Alliance was secretly strengthening itself under the fostering protection of France, and acquiescence of England, and gradually contracting the freedom of its subjects; and when at last it was startled by the four, almost simultaneous, efforts of the people, to obtain some share in the direction of their own government, it felt so conscious of its own power and security, that it did not hesitate to put forth doctrines "in direct repugnance to the fundamental laws of Great Britain; and such as could not," even in Lord Castlereagh's opinion, "be safely admitted as the foundation of a system of international law."

So completely, however, did the allied Sovereigns despise Lord Castlereagh's condemnation of their avowed principles, that they forthwith proceeded to act upon the principles thus condemned; and so entirely did they conceive the British Minister unable to disengage himself from their trammels, that shortly after they again openly and advisedly propounded the same principles, in the very teeth of his denunciations of them.

This conduct of the alliance solved the enigma of its formation.

It was now evident that it was nothing else but a league of absolute Monarchs for the mutual preservation of their unlimited sway, against the encroachments of their people. They were no longer to consult the particular interests of that nation over which each might happen to rule.

The balance of power was no more. "Austria, Russia, and Prussia were to be governed," as the treaty stipulated, "as three branches of one family;" but not content with thus uniting themselves into one Empire, all the weaker States were, whether willing or unwilling, to be made members of the same family; and if they presumed to act independently for themselves, and to take a different view, from that entertained by this triumvirate, of their own interests, by altering their form of government, they were to be corrected by the paternal rod of these holy Patriarchs. But it was not only for great offences that the rod of punishment was exercised. If the press of an independent but less powerful State advocated doctrines more liberal than those permitted by the Alliance, a notification was sent to the government to put a bridle on, what was called, its licentiousness. If a weaker State (for instance the Cantons of Switzerland) dared to give protection to those who

had been obliged to flee their country on account of their political opinions, a mandate was sent to it, with threats in case of disobedience, to disregard the laws of hospitality, and to drive the wretched exiles from the asylum which they had sought.

In short, a new era had commenced in the history of the World,—a system of governing Europe by Congresses \*, instead of by separate and independent Governments, was established. A scheme was formed, and actually begun to be put in operation, to destroy throughout the globe the just freedom of the people. And while all this mighty machinery was being put in movement, England was, if not a willing, at least a passive spectator. England, that had so long been looked upon as the land of freedom, the protector of the oppressed, now no longer afforded a hope that she would erect herself into a barrier which should arrest the progress of such frightful projects.

The glory which had once surrounded her was fled. By sanctioning the unholy spoliations of the Vienna Congress, she lost the respect and confidence of the better portion of the human race, and with it that control over their rulers which alone could be secured by the preservation of that moral strength which those

\* Vide fourth article of the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, Nov. 1818.

who make the eternal principles of justice the guide of their actions will ever acquire over the minds of men.

It is not to be supposed that such a state of things was the result\* which Lord Castlereagh contemplated as likely to arise from his mode of managing our foreign affairs. When he approved or yielded to the wishes of the Continental Monarchs at Vienna, it probably never came across him that by so doing he would ensure the hatred of their people; when he praised the objects of the Holy Alliance, and stated that he believed them to be pure and upright, he probably did not divine their nature; and when he sent a British minister to perform the unworthy office of listening to and reporting the deliberations of the Congresses at Troppau and Laybach, he probably did not perceive that by so doing he was giving the sanction of Great Britain to whatever measures might be there decided upon. But it would appear that the real explanation of his conduct is to be found in the fact, that, all his measures were but temporary expedients, tending to produce no foreseen result. Certain general ideas as to the advantages of preserving peace, coupled with a bias against liberal opinions\* were, apparently, the springs, which regulated each separate determination on which the force of circumstances compelled him to resolve; and these motives of



conduct were sufficiently uniform in their operation to produce systematick mischief, although the individual who was ruled by them seemed to have no settled system, or knowledge of first principles to guide him. \*

Deficient, however, in foresight, as Lord Castlereagh appears to have been, it can hardly be imagined that he was blind to the alarming aspect of affairs. Committed as he was to the Alliance on the one hand, and responsible to the British Parliament on the other, the difficulties of his situation thickened around him on each succeeding day. Neither was the internal condition of this country at all calculated to afford that consolation to his mind, which it must have so much needed.

Two months before he was to have set out for Verona symptoms of aberration of intellect began to manifest themselves; no doubt occasioned by that great bodily fatigue and mental anxiety which must ever be inseparable, from a post in the Government so high, at an epoch so momentous.

The fatal consequences of his state of mind are too well known to require here to be mentioned. He died, leaving his successor, whoever he was to be, in the most arduous situation that it ever fell to the lot of the Foreign Minister of this country to occupy.

## CHAP. II.

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF ENGLAND, FROM THE PEACE  
TO THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE SEALS OF THE FOREIGN  
OFFICE BY MR. CANNING, IN SEPTEMBER, 1822.

MR. CANNING was Lord Londonderry's successor, not only in the situation of Foreign Secretary, but in that of "King's Minister" in the House of Commons.

A brief survey will, therefore, be necessary, as well of the internal relations of the empire, from the peace to the time of Mr. Canning's acceptance of the Foreign Office, as of the line of conduct which he himself pursued during that period (part of which he was a member of the Cabinet), in order that the exact nature of the position in which he was placed may be clearly understood.

Thoroughly to explain that position, a few well known facts respecting the state of the government, previously to the conclusion of the peace, must first be mentioned.

Immediately after the death of Mr. Perceval, in 1812, Lord Liverpool, by the election of his colleagues, was placed at the head of the Trea-

surey, as First Minister. An overture was forthwith made by Lord Liverpool to Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning, to induce them to join the Cabinet; an overture, however, which was made in vain, in consequence of the refusal of Lord Liverpool and his colleagues to take into consideration the state of the Catholick question.

On the failure of this negotiation, Mr. Stuart Wortley made a motion for an address to the Prince Regent, praying that His Royal Highness would be graciously pleased to take measures for the formation of a strong and efficient Administration, by which expressions it was clearly intended to imply, that the Administration then in being was neither strong nor efficient.

The motion was carried by a majority of four; and the Prince Regent promised, when the address was presented to him, to take it "into his immediate and serious consideration."

In conformity with this promise to the House of Commons, the Regent proceeded to the task of forming a new Administration; and to effect this purpose, His Royal Highness confided unlimited powers to Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning. After fruitless negotiations with Lords Grey and Grenville on the one side, and Lord Liverpool on the other, in which the immediate consideration of the Catholic claims, and a strenuous prosecution of the war in Spain, were

the only two points upon which a cordial agreement was required, Lord Wellesley being unable to execute the task intrusted to him was obliged to surrender his commission into the hands of His Royal Highness.

Another attempt of the same nature was made by Lord Moira, which was equally unsuccessful; the negotiation going off in consequence of a misunderstanding respecting the great officers of State in the Royal Household.

These efforts to re-model the Government having proved abortive, there seemed no other alternative but the continuance in office of the members of the old Cabinet; and their exerting themselves to carry on with efficiency the King's service. This alternative was adopted; but the Government thus constituted was perfectly conscious of its own weakness. At the close of the session, an offer was made to Mr. Canning, (perhaps the handsomest that was ever made to a single individual) to induce him to join the Administration. The Foreign Secretaryship (then held by Lord Castlereagh) was to have been given up to Mr. Canning; and nearly all his political adherents were to have been admitted to official situations. But the lead in the House of Commons was still to have been retained by Lord Castlereagh. This last circumstance suggested the idea to some of Mr. Canning's friends, that, unless Lord Castlereagh

surrendered the lead also; the offer ought to be rejected. Mr. Canning himself was not of that opinion. Had he been so, he would, at once, of himself, have declined the proposal : but, as it was, he resolved not to act upon his own individual judgment. The point of precedency was, therefore, referred to three members of the House of Commons, who were supposed to be peculiarly conversant with the usages of that House. They decided that Mr. Canning ought to insist upon the lead ; and, accordingly, the non-acceptance of the offer was notified to those by whom it had been tendered.

It was not again renewed : for not many months after this negotiation, the brilliant successes of Lord Wellington in Spain, and the defeat of Napoleon in Russia, came very opportunely to reinstate the Ministry in the good opinion of the country ; the loss of which good opinion was not again endangered by any subsequent reverses.

After the above-mentioned offer, in the first instance, Mr. Canning, if not an opposer, was still less a supporter of the Ministry ; but when, in consequence of the triumphs of the British arms in Spain, and the overthrow of the French power in the northern parts of Europe, the Government no longer hesitated to make every possible exertion towards the prosecution of the war, a course which, from first to last, Mr.

Canning had urgently and invariably recommended, he naturally became more closely united with an Administration, under whose auspices, his own prophecies, perseveringly and confidently put forth in times when the cause was apparently desperate, were rapidly advancing to their fulfilment. Before, therefore, the war was terminated by Napoleon's abdication, Mr. Canning had become a zealous friend of Lord Liverpool's Administration. When the contest was concluded, Mr. Canning, still being out of office, determined, on account of the health of his eldest son, to visit Lisbon.

The Ministers were then expecting the immediate return of the Prince Regent of Portugal to his European dominions. When, therefore, the report of Mr. Canning's intention came to the knowledge of Lord Liverpool and his colleagues, they became desirous of having the advantage of Mr. Canning's diplomatic services during his residence in the Portuguese Capital.

Added to this consideration, was the wish to obtain that moral support, which the members of the Cabinet felt they would derive from the unequivocal proof of his approbation of their policy, which would be given by his consenting to the formation of a connection between them.

It was accordingly proposed to him to go to Lisbon as Ambassador; and although he was

well aware, that, if he accepted the proffered situation, his enemies would misrepresent and calumniate his motives, he was induced to do so, because the Government made it the condition of enrolling in its ranks, those of his personal friends, who had attached themselves to his political fortunes. For the welfare of those individuals he was peculiarly solicitous, because at this period, it was certainly his intention, at any rate for a season, if not for ever, to retire from political life in this country. His anticipations respecting himself were unfortunately but too correct; for no calumny was too foul, nor misrepresentation too gross, to be employed for the purpose of injuring his character in public estimation. He who had thrice sacrificed the highest offices in the state, because he would not swerve from his principles, was charged with having basely caught at the Lisbon Embassy from a greedy love of office: and liberal as he was, even to a fault, and free from all pecuniary taint, yet was he charged with having sacrificed his honour from a sordid appetite for gain! It cannot be wondered at, that these accusations perpetually asserted, and pertinaciously adhered to, after they had been confuted, did produce a most unjust prejudice against him; and so difficult is it to efface the impression made by oft-repeated falsehoods, that, notwithstanding the triumphant and unanswerable defence which he made of his conduct in the House of Commons, up to

this very hour, many well-meaning individuals, from want of an accurate knowledge of it, will avow their belief that there was no real expectation of the return of the Prince Regent of Portugal to Lisbon, although a British Fleet was actually sent out on purpose to convey His Royal Highness to Europe, and that Mr. Canning gained at least a clear 20,000*l.* by the Embassy, although, to meet the whole of the heavy expenses necessarily attendant upon it, he did not receive altogether two thirds of that sum.

During Mr. Canning's absence at Lisbon, Napoleon returned from Elba to France, was defeated at Waterloo, and surrendered himself a prisoner of war to the captain of a British line-of-battle ship. The peace, which his return had broken, was again restored to the world by his surrender. But peace did not bring to Great Britain unmingled prosperity; for before the close of the year, which these events will ever render memorable in the annals of history, great distress began to afflict the agricultural classes; to remedy which, a bill for the regulation of the importation of corn (highly favourable as it was then thought, and too favourable, as it has since proved, to the landed interest,) was passed by the Parliament, amidst the riots of the Metropolis, and the almost universal complainings of the consumers. This bill came into operation on the 23d of March, 1814, from which time the



ports were kept shut, until they were re-opened, towards the close of 1816, in consequence of the state of famine to which the country was reduced, by the dreadful weather in the harvest-time of that year.

Meanwhile, as the stocks of foreign corn, which had arrived before the passing of the act, were declining, the price of British corn began to rise under the protection of the new law ; and the distress which had, after the peace, first afflicted the agriculturists, and which was, from other and unavoidable causes, approaching the manufacturers, appeared to have been transferred from the one class to the other, in the spring and summer of 1816.

It was only natural that the return of peace, after so long and peculiar a war, should change, and even reverse the positions of the great branches of society ; and since agriculture had flourished, and trade had languished, under the commercial systems of the belligerents in the last years of the war, the immediate suffering of the first, and the temporary relief of the second, in the commencement of the peace, ought not to be matter of surprise.

But the new state, into which both were doomed eventually to settle was fast preparing ; and the manufacturers found, that they could ill support that enhanced price of food, which they were beginning to feel long before it was assignable to natural causes.

They were, however, on the eve of far greater distresses ; which, though much to be lamented, were not properly to be complained of, for they were such as could not have been prevented by human efforts. The harvest of 1816 was one of the most calamitous in the memory of man, both here and on the Continent ; and the rains which destroyed the crops of that year were injurious to the seed-time for those of the next. The wheat crop of 1817 was consequently defective ; and although the extraordinary drought of 1818 was felt only by the spring-sown corn, still the defalcation of oats and barley was sufficient to prevent, in a great degree, the falling of the price of wheat, which would in all probability have otherwise occurred.

In consequence of such successive bad seasons, the prohibitory nature of the corn act was for more than two years rendered almost inoperative ; and while the agriculturists were flattering themselves that they were making out a case for higher protection, and were discontented with a state of markets, with which time has since proved that they ought to have been satisfied, the manufacturers were labouring under the pressure of real and severe privations.

One evil was, however, unconsciously common to both,—an utter ignorance of true or unartificial prices. They complained when they ought to have conformed ; and it may be feared that the publick mind continues to this day under much

delusion of the same nature. The price of corn in 1816 relieved the pecuniary difficulties of the landlords and farmers, but it pressed with peculiar severity on the manufacturing classes of the community. •

The trading interest had totally lost that employment which belonged to a state of war, and to the advantages of a profuse expenditure by the government. They had satisfied the demands of those foreign markets which were in a state of privation, until they were opened by the peace; and unfortunately they were far from being prepared to supply their commodities at those prices, which alone could insure to them a continued or extended trade abroad.

The contemporaneous occurrences of these two calamities,—scarcity of food and want of employment,—produced great discontent amongst the lower orders; a disposition of mind, of which there were not wanting factious demagogues to take advantage, who persuaded the multitude that all their sufferings were owing to the corruption of the legislature, and that a Reform of the House of Commons was the only panacea for the miseries with which, but too surely, they were afflicted.

When Mr. Canning returned to England in the early part of 1816, he found the nation divided into two great parties,—the advocates and the opponents of Reform.

On the one side were ranged all the jacobins

and republicans, whose principles were, in the abstract, hostile to the Monarchy ; and to these were joined all those whose hunger and penury made them listen to whatever any man would tell them respecting the causes of those evils.

In proportion, therefore, as the distress was widely diffused, in like proportion were the friends of Reform numerous amongst the lower classes of the people.

To these, who were Radical Reformers, must be added a portion of the Whigs, far more moderate, however, in their views than those with whom, to a certain extent, they coincided.

On the other side were to be numbered the Government of the Country, the whole of the Tory Party, and an immense majority of the most respectable and opulent classes of the community.

To Reform, Mr. Canning had long been a decided enemy ; for he was well aware what Reform meant, amongst the radicals, who made it the watch-word of their party. Reform with them was not a reformation of the abuses, or even of the fancied abuses, which during a course of centuries might have crept into the British Constitution ; but their aim was to destroy that Constitution which they pretended to desire only to improve.

Reform was the means, Revolution the end of

all their machinations. Reform, therefore, was the question of the day.

In this state of things, when Mr. Canning was invited to become a member of the Cabinet by taking the Presidency of the Board of Control, he accepted the invitation.

With respect to Catholick Emancipation, although it was not to be brought forward as a Government measure, yet, since it was left open for each member of the Cabinet individually to support or to oppose it, according to the bias of his own opinions, Mr. Canning's junction with that body afforded him the best chance of promoting its success. Indeed, from the time when the principle on which the Administration acted on this question was changed from one of resistance into one of neutrality (as was done subsequently to the failure of the negotiations in 1812), there was no obstacle, on account of the Catholics, to Mr. Canning's junction with the Government.

With respect to the only question of immediate moment to the Empire at that epoch, — Reform, — he agreed entirely with his colleagues, and was therefore well inclined to participate in their labours, which had assumed a direction peculiarly in unison with his own ideas of what ought to have been their course; since they were employed in awakening the country to the danger, and in stemming the torrent of Radical

Reform, which many well-intentioned persons were contributing to swell, from not perceiving the direction which it might take, and the devastation which it might occasion.

The distress which the bad harvest of 1816 produced greatly increased the numbers of the disaffected.

Meetings to petition for Reform were held in all parts of the kingdom ; and one, on the same pretence, amounting to near one hundred thousand persons, was congregated in Spa Fields, and was concluded by an attempt at insurrection, which for a few hours spread dismay throughout the Metropolis.

This attempt was, at first, supposed to be nothing more than a sudden and unpremeditated effervescence of popular excitement ; but it was afterwards clearly ascertained that it was in reality the result of a serious conspiracy to upset the Government, and that it had extensive ramifications in all parts of the country, and especially in the manufacturing districts.

When the parliament met, early in the following year (1817), the Ministers were prepared with a chain of evidence to show that treasonable designs to overthrow the Constitution, to divide the land, and to destroy the funds, were entertained by the leaders of the Spa Fields' meeting, in which designs many disaffected persons, at a distance from London, had participated.

The Administration being thus already in possession of information sufficient to convince them of the existence of a conspiracy, that conviction was further strengthened by an attempt on the life of the Prince Regent on his return from the two Houses of Parliament, after His Royal Highness had opened the session in person.

Shortly after the meeting secret committees of both Houses were appointed to examine the information which had been obtained respecting these designs; and in consequence of the reports made by the Committees, both on the alarming reality of the conspiracy, and the necessity of strengthening the hands of the executive, four bills were brought in by Lord Castlereagh: first, a Bill for the preventing the Seduction of Sailors from their duty; second, a Bill to place the Person of the Prince Regent under the same protection as that of the King; third, a Bill for preventing seditious Meetings; fourth, a Bill for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act till the end of the Session. To the two first bills no opposition was made; but the two last were fought, stage by stage, by the Whigs and the Reformers. They were carried, notwithstanding, by large majorities in both Houses.

The unanimous report of another secret committee moved for by the Ministers towards the close of the Session afforded a most complete

justification of the much-condemned measure of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. By means of that very suspension the Government had been enabled, while the Parliament had been sitting, three several times to disconcert the plans of the disaffected, by arresting the leaders, who were to have headed the proposed insurrections.

The state of the manufacturing population was indeed so alarming, that the Government was induced to ask for, and Parliament was induced to consent to, a continuance, during the Prorogation, of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, which, at first, had only been granted for as long as the Session lasted.

Before Parliament again met in the following January (1818), the state of the country had so much improved, that the very first measure introduced by the Ministers was a motion for the repeal of the suspension act; for, notwithstanding that the crop of 1817 was not very productive, yet new markets for commodities having been discovered, and the glut of those articles, which, being manufactured to answer a war demand, the cessation of war had left on hand, having diminished, in the first months of the year, employment began to return to the lower orders, and with it contentment, and less leisure or disposition to listen to the speeches of those who wished to take advantage of the



distresses of the poor to promote their own personal aggrandisement.

Shortly after the commencement of the session (1818), the ministers applied to Parliament for an indemnity to protect them against the consequences of having imprisoned so many individuals. Heavy charges of unjust and arbitrary conduct were brought by the Opposition against the Government, for the manner in which the powers which the Legislature had intrusted in its hands had been exercised ; but no one single case which was brought forward in aid of these charges stood the test of an investigation.

The events of the year, upon the whole, showed that the designs of the enemies of the Constitution were at any rate defeated, if they were not entirely laid aside ; and a most abundant wheat harvest in the autumn contributed to the restoration of general tranquillity.

But if the poor were blessed with again being able to obtain their food at a cheap rate, it was not productive of unmixed benefit to all classes of the community.

The growers of corn began to suffer under a return to those prices, which were yet mistakenly held to be low, and which had for a time been put aside by the dreadful harvest of 1816, and its subsequent consequences. For although the wheat crop of 1818 was not only abundant but well harvested, the spring-sown corn, as before

observed, was almost destroyed by drought. This cause of failure (unlike that of a wet harvest, which gives no previous notice,) became evident at an early period of the year, and the most extraordinary efforts were consequently made by the merchants to procure supplies in every foreign country where they could be found. The importations of spring corn were in consequence excessive; and since it is more easy to economise in the food of animals than in that of human beings, and the rains at the close of the year having brought forth a great abundance of nutritious herbage to facilitate such economy, the farmers found themselves deprived of that advance of price, which alone would have compensated them for the smallness of their produce.

But although after so signal a failure of spring corn it was consistent with the principle of the law that the ports should be opened for that species of grain, the case was far otherwise with wheat; and yet so badly did the provisions of that ill-imagined bill execute their objects, that by the fatal surplus of two-pence, on a six-weeks' average of falling markets, the ports were kept open, for wheat also, during an additional term of three months, in spite of an abundant crop, and one of the finest harvest seasons ever known.

The means and the opportunity of large im-

portations were coincident; and foreign wheat (as well as all other sorts of corn) was poured into the country in such quantities while the ports were open, as tended to depress for a considerable time afterwards the markets of this country.

This distress amongst the agricultural classes was, however, not long confined to those classes alone. The manufacturers, who, during the latter end of 1818, had found a renewal of work, were again, in 1819, thrown out of employment, and the same scenes that had disgraced the year 1817 were acted over once more. At last the celebrated Manchester meeting, at which upwards of one hundred thousand people were collected from the surrounding country, with arms and banners, was of so formidable a description that it excited universal terror.

Parliament was assembled about the middle of November, when measures were proposed by the Government, calculated to remedy the then existing evils.

These measures, commonly known by the name of the Six Acts, though more than justified by circumstances, yet met with considerable opposition both from the Whigs and advocates of Reform in the two Houses,—nevertheless they all passed with considerable majorities.

During the whole of these transactions, Mr.

Canning took a prominent part, and defended most efficiently the measures of the Government. Indeed, it is not too much to say of his speeches, that they mainly contributed to the discomfiture of the plans of the Radicals, and to open men's eyes to the dangerous tendency of their doctrines and projects.

He opposed Reform, because he thought that the House of Commons, in its existing condition, fulfilled the purposes for which it was designed. He condemned the principles which were urged in support of that scheme, because, if they proved either its necessity or its expediency, they likewise proved the necessity and expediency of a complete change in the form of the British Constitution, — a change for which he was not prepared; since, in his opinion, that Constitution had conferred more practical benefits on those who lived under it than any that had ever been devised; and he was, therefore, unwilling to give them up for any speculative and untried theory of Government. “I cannot conceive,” he said, “a Constitution, of which one third part shall be an assembly delegated by the people, — not to consult for the good of the nation, but to speak, day by day, the people's Will, — which must not in a few days' sitting sweep away every other branch of the Constitution that might attempt to oppose or to control it. I cannot

“ conceive how, in fair reasoning, any other  
 “ branch of the Constitution should pretend to  
 “ stand against it. If government be a matter  
 “ of will, all that we have to do is to collect the  
 “ will of the nation, and having collected it by  
 “ an adequate organ, that will is paramount and  
 “ supreme. By what pretension could the House  
 “ of Lords be maintained in equal authority and  
 “ jurisdiction with the House of Commons, when  
 “ once that House of Commons should become  
 “ a direct deputation speaking the people’s will,  
 “ and that will the rule of the government?  
 “ In one way or other the House of Lords must  
 “ act, if it be to remain a concurrent branch of  
 “ the Legislature. Either it must uniformly  
 “ affirm the measures which come from the  
 “ House of Commons, or it must occasionally  
 “ take the liberty to reject them. If it uni-  
 “ formly affirm, it is without the shadow of  
 “ authority. But to presume to reject an act of  
 “ the deputies of the whole nation! — By what  
 “ assumption of right could three or four hun-  
 “ dred great proprietors set themselves against  
 “ the national will? Grant the reformers, then,  
 “ what they ask, on the principles on which they  
 “ ask it, and it is utterly impossible that, after  
 “ such a reform, the constitution should long  
 “ consist of more than one body, and that one  
 “ body a popular assembly.”

Having thus shown how impossible it would

be for the two other branches of the legislature  
 to exist with a radically reformed House of  
 Commons, he explained by it the meaning of  
 the apparently extraordinary and inconsistent  
 conduct of the Radicals, who while they  
 seldom "omitted an opportunity of discrediting  
 "and deriding the privileged orders of society,  
 "yet when they came to discuss the British Con-  
 "stitution, nothing could be more respectful  
 "than their language towards the Crown;  
 "nothing more forbearing than their treatment  
 "of the Aristocracy. The House of Commons  
 "alone was the object of their denunciation.  
 "And why? Because they well knew that with  
 "a House of Commons constructed on their own  
 "principles, the Peerage and the Throne might  
 "exist for a day, but might be swept away at  
 "any moment from the face of the earth by the  
 "first angry vote of such a House of Commons.  
 "Born under a Monarchy," said he, "I am not  
 "called upon to demonstrate, *a priori*, that it  
 "was necessary that the British Constitution  
 "should be a Monarchy. It is sufficient for me  
 "that I find it is so, and have, consequently, al-  
 "though without my individual vote or con-  
 "sent, imposed upon me the duty of allegiance  
 "to that monarchy under which I have been  
 "born."

Such was the language that Mr. Canning in-  
 variably held on this agitating question; and

this exposure of the designs of the Radicals of course made him a peculiar object of hatred and terror to them. Neither, as has been already stated, did he shrink from the responsibility of being the strenuous and prominent advocate of the several bills introduced to arm the Executive with extraordinary powers to disconcert the plans of the disaffected. His speeches on these occasions are too well known to need any notice here. But since in the course of one of them he let fall an expression which his enemies seized for the purpose of fastening upon him a charge of the most malignant description, and, since notwithstanding the most satisfactory explanation of it, the calumny was repeated against him after his death, it may be well to remind those who only remember the oft-re-echoed expression "of the revered and ruptured Ogden," on what occasion, and with what drift and application it was that that expression was uttered.

Ogden was one of those taken up for sedition under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and had suffered from a rupture for several years previously to his being so taken up. About four months after he was arrested he was seized with a paroxysm of his complaint, and was relieved by the prison surgeon performing on him an operation which effected a permanent cure, for which, on his leaving the prison, as well as

for his general good treatment, he expressed himself, by *letter*, in grateful terms to his gaoler.

In a petition to Parliament this same Ogden was induced to represent that his disease originated from the *weight* of his irons, (although it is a fact that the paroxysm of it did not even come on till several weeks after all fetters had been removed from him,) and also to declare that, after it had been so produced, he was left for sixteen hours writhing in agonies without assistance !

It was, then, not Ogden's infirmity, but his gross and infamous falsehood, which Mr. Canning wished to expose ; and as some of the members of the House had laid great stress upon this case, as a proof of the tyrannical dispositions of the Administration, he ridiculed, and justly ridiculed, the attempt on their part to fix a charge of cruelty upon the agents of the Ministers, and through them upon the Ministers themselves ; since, in point of fact, nothing could be more humane than the treatment which, when confined by their orders, the wretched man experienced at their hands.

It, therefore, was most unjust, on account of these words, to accuse Mr. Canning of unfeelingly laughing at the sufferings of a fellow-creature, after those who had invented the fable had so blended it with the infirmity, that it was hardly possible, in holding up the falsehood



to the derision which it deserved, to separate it completely from the innocence of the misfortune.

But the true cause of the great pains that were taken to misrepresent this expression is to be found in the desire to lower as much as possible the character of a man whose unanswerable expositions of the effects which must inevitably ensue from the following of the suggestions of the Radicals presented the greatest obstacles to their adoption. To lessen, therefore, the value of his opinions, by degrading his character, was the reason why the meaning of the expression was so maliciously and perseveringly misinterpreted. The same motive operated to produce similar conduct with respect to his Lisbon Embassy, — the latter was the pecuniary job, the former the unfeeling jest, of a man of the most unbounded liberality, and the tenderest heart. But his real crime was his love for the constitution of his country, and the greatness of his talents to defend it. When insidious schemes were brought forward to destroy it, under the pretence of improving it, he showed their fallacy, and laid bare their tendency. When the hands of the Executive were strengthened with extraordinary powers, he proved that these powers were used for, *and not against*, the people. When restrictive laws were enacted, he satisfied the nation of their utility,

and caused the better part to look upon them in their true light, as protective and not subversive of their liberties.

The passing of the Six Acts restored order, confidence, and a reverence for the laws throughout the nation; but if they extinguished the hopes, it cannot be supposed that they at the same time changed the feelings and opinions of the radical reformers.

The disappointment, indeed, of a few of the most desperate amongst them showed itself in a still more daring and criminal enterprise than any that had apparently ever been contemplated. About a dozen of them entered into a conspiracy to murder the whole of the Cabinet Ministers when assembled at dinner at the house of the Lord President of the Council. Through the disclosure of an individual who was privy to the plot, the whole gang were arrested just before they were about to commence their bloody operations; and six of them paid shortly after the extreme penalty of the law. The fact, however, of any men being found hardy enough to engage in so dangerous an enterprise was sufficient evidence, that had they but succeeded in their venturous task there would not have been wanting others who would have joined them, in their ulterior views.

A short time before the discovery of this conspiracy, George the Third died. His succes-

sor having so long held the reins of power, the change in the situation of the latter personage was more nominal than real. But such was not the case with the Princess of Wales, who, in attaining the rank of Queen, acquired rights and privileges, which hitherto she had not enjoyed.

The conduct, under all the circumstances of this case, which it would have been wise for the Ministers to pursue, was obvious. On the one hand, the Prince of Wales, before his Consort went abroad, had declared his fixed determination never again to meet her either in publick, or in private. On the other hand, Her Royal Highness had led, during her absence from England, a life of great indecorum and reported profligacy; of this the Ministers were not ignorant. That the Princess of Wales had been in the habit of treating an individual, who had been her servant, on a footing of perfect equality, was a matter of publick notoriety in Italy; nor was Her behaviour towards him such as to indicate that she thought concealment necessary, or desirable. The Ministers, therefore, knowing how she had conducted herself, held her return to England to be an event wholly out of the question. This view of the matter unfortunately lulled them into a state of false security, and prevented the adoption of the prudent course of leaving no effort untried to induce Her Majesty to remain abroad.

To keep her abroad was, in point of fact, their wish. But unluckily they were so strongly impressed with the idea that her return was impossible, that they did not act with that caution which probably they would have done had they, for one instant, contemplated its possibility.

Her Majesty's arrival in England, consequently took the Ministers completely by surprise. Things, however, were then gone too far for them to hesitate. The manner in which she had been treated could only be defended by the establishment of her guilt. The Opposition were clamorous that she should be considered as innocent until she was proved to be guilty; and the fact of her return necessarily brought the question to issue. For the Government to act towards her as if she were blameless, when they felt convinced that she was guilty, and believed that they had the means of establishing the fact by legal proofs, would neither have been a safe or a justifiable course; and for them to have treated her as guilty without enquiry, was a still more preposterous alternative.

From the very first instant of her setting her foot in England, she became (as was to have been expected) the rallying point for the disaffected. But besides this class of individuals, which the events of the preceding years proved

to have been very numerous, and who one and all espoused the Queen's cause, for no other reason than because it was against the King and the Government, there were vast numbers, who, although firmly attached to the Constitution, looked upon the Queen with compassion, and thought that she was entitled to exemption from punishment. Certain it is that there never was a period in the history of the country when the public mind was worked up to a greater degree of excitement than it was on this occasion ; and it is to be lamented, that the question should have been brought to that state; in which it was equally dangerous either to advance, or to recede.

For the Ministers themselves nothing was left but to go on, and that, fearlessly, and without delay. And accordingly, two days after Her Majesty's arrival, a message from the King was sent down to Parliament, accompanied by a green bag, the contents of which were to be submitted to a secret committee, to report to the two Houses whether there were not grounds for further proceedings against the Queen.

The House of Commons, however, showed the greatest unwillingness to open the green bag; and on Lord Castlereagh's proposing to refer the bag to a secret committee, Mr. Wilberforce moved, that the debate should be delayed; which motion, from the manner in which it was

received by the House, the ministers judged it expedient not to resist. A delay being thus agreed upon, negotiations were entered into to adjust the differences.

They, however, failed in their object; Her Majesty's legal advisers insisting, either on the restoration of her name to the Liturgy, or an introduction to the court of the Foreign Sovereign in whose dominions she might fix her residence. Both these alternatives being rejected, the negotiations were broken off. Still, however, Mr. Wilberforce would not relax in his virtuous efforts to spare the morals of the country, and the dignity of the crown, from the pollution of such an investigation. An address to Her Majesty, moved by that gentleman, imploring her to give up the point of the Liturgy, and to assure her that her so doing would not be considered as reflecting upon her honour or character, was carried by an immense majority, and was presented to her by a deputation of the House of Commons on the following day. It did not, however, produce the desired effect; and all hopes of averting the evil being extinguished, the green bag was referred to secret committees of both Houses of Parliament.

In consequence of the report of these committees, a bill of Pains and Penalties was introduced into the House of Lords by Lord Liverpool; and, as is well known, after a mass

of evidence both for and against it had been gone through, it was withdrawn in its last stage, owing to the smallness of the majority by which its third reading passed.

Of the evidence that was produced it will be sufficient to say, that while it was difficult for any unprejudiced mind to have examined it without a moral conviction that the Queen was, at some time or other, guilty of the adultery; so, on the other hand, the character of the witnesses was damaged to that degree, that no conscientious juryman could have considered the crime as legally proved, beyond the possibility of doubt.

The way in which the business terminated was most fortunate for the Administration. While the majority of the House of Lords absolved them from having brought forward the charges without sufficient grounds, the smallness of that majority served them with a pretext for not sending down the bill to the lower House of Parliament, where, had it once been introduced, no one could have ventured to have predicted what consequences might have resulted, from keeping the people in a continued state of excitement, by any further proceedings; and those proceedings to be carried on in such an assembly as the House of Commons. It was no doubt feelings of this nature that induced many of the Peers to vote against the bill.

The failure of the measure was hailed as a triumph by the Queen's party, and gave rise to great demonstrations of joy throughout every part of the United Kingdom.

Mr. Canning's conduct during these transactions is well known. He acted with the Cabinet so long as any hope remained of averting proceedings against Her Majesty, in which he declared his resolution to take no part, both to his colleagues before Her Majesty's return, and to the House of Commons, in the very first speech that he made upon the subject. It was not, however, till all "hope of an amicable adjustment was finally extinguished, that he "tendered the resignation of his office. Till "then, he thought his continuance in the administration might have been advantageous." The King, however, refused to accept the resignation, and gave Mr. Canning full permission to withdraw entirely from any share in the measures to be adopted against the Queen. If it is asked why he did not insist on the acceptance of his resignation, the answer is, that other interests besides Her Majesty's were at stake, and believing, as he did, that the investigation then was unavoidable, and likewise being convinced that it would be most disastrous to the country and to the King, and that it would give such a fulcrum to the Radicals, on which to rest their lever to overthrow the Constitution, he



thought that, consistently with his duty and his principles, he ought not to make that which was at once inevitable, and dangerous, still more dangerous, by insisting on the acceptance of his resignation, when all personal reasons were obviated by the parties to whom he tendered it. Accordingly he left England, and “abstained entirely from all interference on the subject of “the Queen’s affairs.”

When, however, after the trial was over, and the danger from it had gone by, the “new state “in which he found those affairs upon his return “to England” induced him again to tender his resignation. “For a minister to absent himself “altogether from the expected discussions on “that subject, intermixed as they were likely to “be with the general business of the session, “appeared to him quite impossible. To be “present as a minister, taking no part in those “discussions, could only have been productive “of embarrassment to himself, and of perplexity “to his colleagues. To take any part in them, “was then, as always, out of the question.

“Offering, therefore, to resign, was the only “remedy for these difficulties ;” and the motives which before had dictated the rejection of that offer no longer existing, His Majesty was graciously pleased to accept his resignation.

It was no sooner known at the India House that Mr. Canning had resigned the Presidency

of the Board of Control, than the Court of Directors unanimously caused to be conveyed to him "the expression of their deep regret at his retirement, and the sincere respect with which they had been impressed by the able, upright, and conciliatory manner in which he had discharged the duties of his office." — "The functions of the Board over which he had presided for a period of nearly five years had been exercised," they said, "with so much candour and courtesy, as well as with such invariable attention to the interests both of the publick and the Company, that they had been almost entirely divested of the invidious character, which must ever, in some degree, attach to a controlling Board."

But this was not the only testimony of gratitude that he received from the East India Company : for, at a special Court of Proprietors, a resolution was carried, expressive of the cordial concurrence of the proprietors in the sentiments expressed by the Court of Directors.

These two proceedings are without example in the history of the Company.

Immediately after the Queen's trial was over, Parliament was prorogued. Before it met again, on the following year, meetings in all parts of the country passed resolutions, or voted petitions, condemnatory of Ministers, with respect to their treatment of the Queen. Counter addresses

were likewise got up, and meetings held on the side of the Administration, but they chiefly contented themselves with condemning the violent and revolutionary spirit of the opposite party, and rarely, if ever, dropped an expression laudatory of the course adopted by the ministry in the late unhappy investigation.

If there had been a party in the State, in whom the country had reposed confidence, to succeed those, it is very probable that they would not have been able to have preserved their places. But it so happened that the Whigs, from having joined the Reformers, were little trusted by the mass of the people of property and influence; the great majority of which latter class would have dreaded, as the worst extremity possible, the introduction of men into power, many of whom were pledged to endeavour to carry a measure which was looked upon as tending to the subversion of the Constitution. Still, however, the whole business of the Queen's trial afforded ample opportunity for attack; and when Parliament met, several motions on the subject were brought forward, which, however, were negatived by large majorities.

The truth was, there was nothing in Her Majesty's character to excite either respect, enthusiasm, or even approbation; and from the moment that, by the withdrawal of the bill

against her, she ceased to be a victim, from that moment her popularity began to decline.

The mortifications to which she was exposed in attempting to preserve it, were, some of them, of the most painful description; and her abortive attempt to be present at the Coronation, or to create confusion, during the ceremonial, excited the pity, indeed, of the spectators, but not their sympathy.

The Queen herself deeply felt her altered situation; and it no doubt contributed to accelerate the termination of her existence, and to make her neglect, till too late, the remedies necessary to preserve a life which she hardly felt desirous of prolonging.

The suddenness of her death again called forth sentiments of the deepest commiseration. Her misfortunes were then alone remembered; and the people manifested their lively sorrow by attending in multitudes her Funeral procession.

Unluckily, from an error in judgment, the Government decided that it should not be allowed to pass through the City, at the entrance of which the Lord Mayor and Corporation had intended to join the procession. So soon as this decision became known, the most violent indignation was excited; and the mournful pageant was accompanied, in its progress through the metropolis, by enormous crowds, who created very serious tumult and disorder.

In the course of the ensuing Session of Parliament the Ministers were more than once left in a minority. The distress of the agricultural classes produced the loudest clamours for economy and retrenchment; and although the Ministry did all in their power to satisfy reasonable expectations, yet, of course, in the eyes of those whose business it was to be dissatisfied whatever retrenchments might be made, enough was not done, and complaints on this head afforded unceasing topicks for declamation. Some of the efforts to embarrass the Ministry were successful: thus a small majority was obtained against the malt tax; which vote, however, was 'set aside two days after, by a large majority.

When, however, the Government was outvoted on the agricultural horse tax, it was not judged expedient to attempt to reverse the decision.

On both these occasions many of the country gentlemen swelled the lists of the majority: smarting under the pressure of the times, they were apt, like all in similar situations, to listen to those who professed to be able at once to point out to them the cause and prescribe the remedy of the peculiar evils under which they "laboured. They therefore acquiesced in the truth of the proposition that the depression of agriculture was exclusively owing to taxation; the inaccuracy of which assertion may be considered as proved

by the fact, that the evils complained of have diminished, in a far greater proportion than the taxes.

The true causes, indeed, of those evils are to be found in the low prices produced by the great excess of supply occasioned by the Corn Bill, and the increased value of money in every part of the world.

These defeats which the Ministers had suffered made them anxious to increase in the House of Commons their strength, which had been much weakened by the loss of Mr. Canning's sound reasoning and eloquence, which had so often secured them victory, and checked, by a salutary awe, the vehement language of their most formidable opponents.

At the close of the session, therefore, Lord Sidmouth resigned the Home Secretaryship of State, and was succeeded in it by Mr. Peel, who brought with him considerable talents ; and from not having been connected with the Government during the trial of the Queen, was free from the unpopularity which had attached itself to all those who had taken part in her prosecution.

Mr. Peel was the best substitute for Mr. Canning that the Government could have procured. The latter had taken but a small part in the business of the Session ; and with the exception of a speech on the affairs of Naples, condemnatory of the policy of the Opposition,

he only spoke on the subject of Catholick Emancipation. A bill introduced by Mr. Plunket granting that boon passed the House of Commons, which was the first occasion on which any bill with those provisions ever received the sanction of either House of Parliament.

It was rejected in the Lords by a considerable majority; but, upon the whole, the question seemed to have made considerable progress; and the appointment of the Marquess Wellesley as Lord Lieutenant, and His Majesty's visit to Ireland before the close of the year, contributed to excite the sanguine hopes of the friends of the measure that the time was not far distant when this fertile source of contention would be set at rest for ever.

Notwithstanding Mr. Peel's accession to the Ministry, there can be no doubt but that the head of it would have been too glad to have again had the benefit of Mr. Canning's countenance and counsels; and since the Queen's affairs could no longer afford matter for discussion, it was supposed by many that Mr. Canning would have rejoined the Administration. Whether there would not have been insurmountable obstacles to his so doing, from the course of our foreign policy, as well as from other considerations, it is needless here to discuss, as no positive offer was made to him.

But the reason that prevented an offer being

made to him was, as is well known; the feelings of alienation entertained towards him by the highest personage in the realm; who had then formed a determination that he should not again be invited to become a member of the Cabinet. These sentiments were strengthened by the conviction, which His Majesty entertained, that the Ministry, as it was then constituted, was well able to carry on the Government of the country; a conviction which was further confirmed by the return of the people to those feelings of loyal attachment to His Person, which, during the life of the Queen, had been for a time suspended. For the restoration of employment to the manufacturing districts, where, when distress exists, from the population being more concentrated, the cries of discontent are generally the loudest, prevented any of those alarming indications of disaffection which in preceding years had agitated the British portion of the United Kingdom.

The continued low price of agricultural produce, however, still pressed heavily upon that important interest; but the sufferers of this class were of a different description, and their sufferings less acute.

When distress prevails amongst the manufacturers, thousands of labourers, all perhaps belonging to a single parish, are sometimes thrown out of employ, and fall into a state of all but actual starvation, from their numbers being too



large to admit of their distress being sufficiently relieved by parochial aid. On the other hand, the agricultural labourers being dispersed over the face of the country, the supply of their wants is the more easy, because those on whom it falls are more numerous, and in the aggregate more wealthy.

True it is that agricultural labourers have to endure privations in common with the manufacturers, but then a certain number must always be employed, if the land is to be cultivated, while a master manufacturer stops all his works at once, and the whole, not a part, of the artizans engaged in them are discharged, and sent forth to cabal together, and brood over their misfortunes. Hence stagnation in manufactures has often produced a greater show of discontent than perhaps an equal quantity of misery dispersed amongst the agricultural population.

Towards the end, therefore, of the year 1821, and beginning of 1822, though the agricultural interests were grievously depressed, yet there was by no means that spirit of disloyalty manifested, which had been the characteristick of some former years, although the cry for Reform was raised by the agriculturists, which had been the rallying cry of the manufacturers, who had previously passed through a similar ordeal. The meetings, called to consider of the distress, generally ended by passing resolutions in favour

of Reform ; and some of them, on the suggestions of Mr. Cobbett, who went about from meeting to meeting to propagate his own hatred of the fundholders, or, as he called them, the "Fund Lords," recommended an "equitable adjustment ;" or, in other words, a spoliation of one species of property for the supposed benefit of another.

The continuance of these embarrassments was one of the first subjects that occupied the attention of Parliament after its assembling.

The topic was mentioned in the Speech from the Throne, and debates took place on every question, that could by possibility be supposed, however remotely, to affect it. Taxation, Currency, Corn Laws, Sinking Fund, and Parliamentary Reform, each in their turn came under discussion, but without producing any practical result. Each member appeared to think that his own particular plan, be it what it might, would prove beneficial, if adopted, to the agriculturists. And some curious doctrines on political economy (such as making wheat the standard for money), which had never before been broached, and which have not since been attempted to be revived, were gravely propounded by some Members for the consideration and approval of the Legislature.

The question next in interest to this of agri-

culture was the state of Ireland, where a spirit of systematic outrage prevailed, to repress which, the Executive Government of that Island required to be armed with extraordinary powers.

The insurrection act was re-enacted, and by means of it the scenes of violence, by which the southern provinces had been disgraced, were in a great degree arrested.

Nothing was done this Session to carry the great question, on which the peace of that unhappy country so essentially depended. But Mr. Canning made an effort to advance the cause, by bringing in a bill to enable the Catholick Peers to sit in the Upper House of Parliament, which, however, like the more comprehensive measure of the preceding year, after having passed the Commons, received its death-blow in the Lords.

A few days before he introduced this measure, he had made another eloquent speech pointing out the dangers of Radical Reform, which question had been again brought forward in the House of Commons.

At the time when these two speeches were delivered by him, he, in common with the rest of the world, believed that they were the last, at any rate for a great length of time, that it would fall to his lot to make. From the circumstances already mentioned, he had given up all idea of holding office in England. He was (as is now known) straitened in his pecuniary

affairs : the Presidentship of the Board of Control had given him an insight, and an interest in the affairs of India ; and the experience that the Directors had acquired of him during the time that he held that office, made them anxiously desire that he should undertake the high and arduous post of Governor General of their vast possessions. When, therefore, the proposition was made to him by the Court of Directors, he had not much difficulty in deciding ; and shortly after the commencement of the session of 1822, it was announced that he was to be the successor of Lord Hastings.

The idea that the country was about to lose his services, at home, gave a peculiar zest to what were then considered as his parting admonitions ; and while it cannot be denied that there were some in opposite extremes, (the ultra-Tories who hated him for his liberality, and the Radicals who dreaded his opposition,) who rejoiced at the prospect of his approaching departure ; there were others, and those the most numerous, who sincerely regretted it.

Mr. Canning was to have left England early in November. All his preparations were made : when the unexpected death of Lord Londonderry, which took place on the 12th of August, seemed likely to be an impediment to the fulfilment of his intentions. No sooner was the catastrophe announced to the world, than all

eyes turned on Mr. Canning as the man to whom the future guidance of the Empire ought to be intrusted.

But, although Mr. Canning was at once proclaimed the successor of the deceased Minister *by the voice of the nation*, its rulers did not seem so prompt in coming to the same decision. At the period when Lord Londonderry died, the King was on his way to Scotland : Mr. Canning was on his road to Liverpool, to take leave of his constituents. The fatal event made no change in Mr. Canning's plans ; for, notwithstanding that rumours of the most positive kind were afloat, he himself, perhaps, felt less certain than any other man in the kingdom, and, undoubtedly, was as little desirous as any, that a change should be made in his destination.

He, therefore, neither delayed his visit to Liverpool, nor ceased to avow that it was intended as a farewell.

For the long space of ten years he had been the popular Representative of that vast commercial place. Without any efforts of himself, or his friends, and personally unknown to all but two or three of the gentlemen who signed the requisition, he was invited, at the Dissolution of Parliament in 1812, by some of the principal inhabitants of Liverpool, to become a candidate for the representation of their Borough. He at once acceded to the flattering proposal ; and

after a severe contest (with Mr. Brougham for one of his opponents) he was placed at the head of the poll by a triumphant majority. The attention which he paid to the interests of the Town and its inhabitants, after he became their member, considerably augmented his popularity, which a visit in 1814, when he delivered one of his most splendid orations, served only to increase. In 1816 he was re-elected, having vacated his seat by accepting the Presidency of the Board of Control. On this occasion a sham contest was got up by his opponents, who proposed a gentleman of great respectability, in spite of that gentleman's expressed determination, that he would not take his seat, even in the event of his return.

There was more of virulence shown on this occasion than during the first election; for the truth was, at Liverpool, as elsewhere, Mr. Canning's enemies had been zealously at work to misrepresent him; and the calumnies which were circulated on the subject of his Embassy to Lisbon had not been altogether without their effect.

In the summer of 1818, Parliament had been dissolved, and he again had to meet his Constituents. During the interval that had elapsed between this and the preceding election, he had been chiefly occupied in taking an active part against the Reformers.

Reform, indeed, at this period, was an all-

absorbing question; and certain it is, that He conscientiously entertained the opinion, whether that opinion was wrong or right, that during the years 1816, 1817, 1818, and 1819, this country passed through a crisis, which, had not the decided and vigorous conduct of the Executive Government been backed by the support of the Legislature, would have ended in the total overthrow of the whole fabric of the Constitution. Accordingly, the burden of all his speeches at this election consisted in arguments against Radical Reform, which he showed must inevitably end in revolution. It was on one of these occasions that he pronounced the ablest and most conclusive speech that he ever uttered against these sweeping changes in our constitutional system.

Lord Sefton and General Gascoigne were the other candidates; and the history of the contest affords a curious specimen of electioneering tactics. On the eighth day, Lord Sefton retired, and Mr. Canning's return was secured by a large majority.

In 1820, when, in consequence of the death of George the Third, Parliament was dissolved, Mr. Canning was returned for the fourth and last time for Liverpool, by a still larger majority than had ever before placed him at the head of the poll. His antagonist on this occasion had no particular merit save that of being a Radical

Reformer, and never had the most remote chance of success.

It was about a year and a half after this election, that, having accepted the office of Governor General of India, he arrived once more at Liverpool, for any thing that he knew to the contrary, for the last time, if not in his life, at any rate until such a portion of it had been consumed as would have been sufficient to have severed for ever the connexion which then existed between himself and his constituents.

On the 23d of August he dined with the Can-  
ning Club ; on which occasion he took the opportunity of recommending to the agricultural classes “to practise that same degree of patience “which had been generally displayed by those “beneath them,” when they had to endure privations.

It was not, however, until the 30th of that month that the grand festival was prepared for him in the great room of the Lyceum ; on which occasion upwards of 500 of his friends sat down to dinner.

In the morning of that day, he had received the most gratifying proofs of the respect and attachment of the inhabitants.

An address, praising his conduct, and thanking him for his services, was presented to him, after it had been “approved and sanctioned by the “unanimous votes of *all* the mercantile asso-



"ciations in Liverpool:" amongst whom were to be found all parties in politicks.

It was, therefore, with feelings of no common joy and exultation, that, when addressing his audience at the dinner, he was enabled to say that "he stood in the peculiar circumstances "of not knowing that he had amongst his "constituents, at that moment, even one political enemy."

Mr. Canning's speech related to three different topics. The first was Catholick Emancipation; the second, Reform; and the third had reference to those reports already mentioned, that he was to be the successor of Lord Londonderry. Under the second of these heads, Mr. Canning, with his usual clearness of demonstration, again showed that the doctrines of the Reformers went not to an alteration, but to a positive subversion of the Constitution.

On the subject of Emancipation, he said, that, "after the experience of a fruitless struggle of "more than ten years, as an individual, he "should be induced thenceforth, or perhaps "after one more general trial, to seek upon that "question a liberal compromise, rather than "persevere in fighting, perhaps ten years more, "in vain, for unqualified concession."

This avowal was subsequently represented by Mr. Canning's enemies as an abandonment, on his part, of the Catholics, and as having been

made for the base purpose of facilitating his entrance into office, for which the opening was then apparently already made; but with what justice such a charge was brought against him, may be decided by considering the whole tenour of his conduct, from first to last, on this important question.

So long as George the Third was in possession of his mental faculties, Mr. Canning, following the example of Mr. Pitt, on his return to office, opposed the Catholick claims, both out of respect to the prejudices, or the scruples, of that good and venerable monarch, and a dread of the danger which might accrue to the country, should the highest estate in the realm be at variance with the others.

As soon, however, as the Regency was established, Mr. Canning took the earliest opportunity of declaring himself in favour of concession; and in support of the Catholick cause, in 1812, he declined office (as has already been stated), because the then existing Administration resisted all deliberation upon the subject.

At that particular moment he considered the question as one of the most pressing urgency. Great Britain was then engaged in a war, requiring unexampled exertion, the result of which it was impossible with any certainty to predict.

The very salvation of her independence might

have turned upon the settlement of the Catholick claims. He, therefore, refused to belong to a government which was determined "to resist," as a government, "all consideration" of the state of those claims. And, when the task of forming an administration devolved upon him, in conjunction with Lord Wellesley, the principle first mentioned of those "on which the administration was intended to be formed" was stated to be, the taking the Catholick question into immediate consideration, with a view to its settlement.

To further this same settlement, in June of the same year, he himself brought forward a resolution pledging the House of Commons to take "into its consideration the state of the "Catholick question, with a view to a final and "conciliatory adjustment of it."

The resolution was adopted by a majority of 125. And, in the following session, a bill granting Emancipation was brought in by Mr. Grattan, which passed through its first and second stages with majorities of about 40.

On its being committed, Mr. Abbott, who was at that time Speaker of the House of Commons, spoke against the measure, and moved, (for the purpose of insuring its rejection) that the clause by which Catholics were enabled to sit in parliament should be omitted. The Speaker triumphed, the omission of the clause being car-

ried by a majority of four ; and, as the admission to seats in the legislature was the boon above all others to which the Catholicks looked, the friends of emancipation, finding that the one thing most desired was refused, abandoned altogether the bill.

From the abandonment of this bill to the year 1821, the Catholick cause did not prosper in the House of Commons ; probably from its supporters feeling, that in the altered condition of the world, the prosperity of the Empire was no longer involved so deeply as it was in 1813 in its being brought to an immediate termination. Still, however, efforts were almost yearly made to induce the legislature to concede the question, and to restore, or rather to give for the first time, tranquillity to Ireland. On all these occasions Mr. Canning zealously exerted himself in support of whatever measures were proposed ; but in the course of that period, from the change as well in the temper of the publick mind as in the position of the country, his opinions became somewhat modified, — not, however, with respect to the expediency, safety, or justice, but with respect to the possibility of obtaining unqualified concession.

In 1812, when fighting for our existence, he thought that the determination on the part of the government to “resist all consideration” of the question was fraught with imminent danger

to the country. The obstacle, during the existence of which the Catholics had been contented to forbear, was then withdrawn. They had well known the scruples of the King, and were not unaware of the firm pertinacity with which he adhered to the dictates of his conscience. The larger and better portion of them therefore had been willing to leave undisturbed the few years which yet remained to a sovereign under whose mild sway their condition had been so considerably ameliorated. But when the King ceased to be an obstacle, a refusal even to "consider" of concession became peculiarly galling.

So long as there existed for that refusal a reason which was limited in its duration, so long the Catholics might have been content patiently to wait for its extinction; but when every reason urged for the continuance of their disabilities was eternal in its operation, the period of their degradation seemed to be indefinitely prolonged, and thus to the pangs of disappointment was added the bitterness of despair.

Mr. Canning, therefore, then held that the resolution of the government to resist all consideration was headstrong, and that it would be highly desirable that concession should be immediate. The House of Commons agreed with him; and it is very probable, that had not the alarms of many been diminished by the war

taking a favourable turn, the Catholick Question would not have so long continued to agitate the Empire, or cripple its resources.

As the fear of Buonaparte subsided, the dread of the Pope arose; and when Mr. Canning accepted office in 1816, the opinions of the great mass of the population of England had become, more than they had been, hostile to Emancipation.

Mr. Canning perceived all the difficulties with which the question was encompassed in consequence of this change of sentiment; and since the immediate urgency of it had gone by, he no longer considered that it would be wise or politick to do violence to the feelings of the people of England by any extraordinary efforts to carry Emancipation; still less did he think that an attempt on the part of the Cabinet to use the influence of the Government for such a purpose would be attended with success.

He thought that the question was one which ought to "win, not force its way," and that, as argument and sound reasoning were decidedly in its favour, a temperate discussion of it was the best means of insuring conversions.

In 1813, Mr. Canning was one of those who acquiesced in the propriety of abandoning the bill of that year when the Parliamentary clause was thrown out. Since that period, however, he frequently lamented his acquiescence.

In his speech in 1817 he said, "that for himself, rather than, as in 1813, risk all, to obtain all, and throw away much, because all could not be secured, he would be contented with such a degree of concession as might be sanctioned by a tolerably general concurrence of opinions." Again, in 1821, when Mr. Plunket succeeded in carrying a bill for Emancipation through the House of Commons, on its passing through the committee, and Mr. Bankes (as Mr. Abbott had done before) moving that the Parliamentary clause in favour of the Catholics should be omitted, Mr. Canning took the opportunity of saying, that "he hoped that in whatever way the Committee might decide upon Mr. Bankes's motion, the progress of the bill would not be stopped."

It was in conformity with the opinion thus expressed, that in the following year he himself brought forward a bill to enable Roman Catholic Peers to sit in the Upper House of Parliament. There was something in their case which separated it from that of the rest of their Catholic brethren: they had been excluded by a more recent act than that which had excluded Catholics from the House of Commons; and they were so limited in their numbers, that even the most timorous opposers of their claims could hardly fear the introduction, into the Legislature, of seven men, yielding in loyalty and

honour to no other seven men in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Canning likewise felt confident, that the admission of Catholics into the Upper House would go a great way towards dispelling the prejudices against their sitting in the Lower, especially when it should have been discovered that their votes and conduct were not influenced by different motives from those of the Protestant Peers. Besides, whatever diminished the *quantum* that was left to be ultimately granted destroyed a specifick ground of supposed danger, and brought the question so much nearer to a final adjustment.

It appears, therefore, that the view of the question which he had for some time taken, was, that the removal, step by step, of the remaining disabilities would be the best, and perhaps the surest, mode of eventually disposing of it. The less the Catholics had to ask, the less cause of alarm was there to the Protestants on account of what they would have to surrender. The act, moreover, which was carried in 1817, by which promotion in the Army and Navy was opened to the Catholics, served to strengthen his opinions; since this measure, which ten years before had upset an Administration, was actually passed, *sub silentio*!!! by the two Houses of Parliament.

It was, therefore, in exact accordance with



all his previously declared sentiments, sentiments avowed at different times from 1817 downwards, that in his parting speech at Liverpool he declared, as an individual, that “ next to the immediate success of the ‘whole measure, which he had as much as ever at heart, he should wish, as well for the benefit of those most immediately concerned, as for the general peace of the kingdom, to see such an arrangement as should remove all practical cause of complaint on the one side, without inciting vague and indefinite apprehensions on the other ; referring to a more favourable opportunity, and to the progress of publick opinion, that complete and final settlement, of which he should never cease to maintain the expediency as well as the justice.”

If these opinions had then for the first time been published by him, it must be confessed, that, however pure his intentions might have been, they would have been liable to a suspicion which nothing could clear away ; but when, for upwards of five years, he is found publicly avowing the same sentiments, and when only a few short months had elapsed since he introduced a measure into Parliament in accordance with them, it is quite obvious, that it was most unjust to attribute conduct so open, and so consistent, to base and unworthy motives.

The third topick of his speeches, which related

to the rumours afloat respecting his being the successor of Lord Londonderry, was the one of the greatest delicacy.

On the one hand, so far from wishing to occupy the offices which had been filled by that nobleman, he felt that, if a sense of duty compelled him to accept any offer that might be made to him, he could not do so without making a great personal sacrifice. Had he proclaimed his feelings, it would have been, of course, said, that he was unnecessarily enhancing the value of his services. On the other hand, the expression of any wish to obtain the vacant post, even had he entertained it, would have been instantly described as a greedy *appetency* for office.

To have said nothing on the subject, after the chairman had pointedly alluded to it, would have been but an ill return to his constituents for their unbounded confidence and attachment ; and, moreover, would have made a needless and therefore foolish mystery of the fact, that “ he knew as little as any man that then listened to him of any arrangements likely to grow out of the existing state of things.”

He therefore frankly avowed that “ he had nothing either to tell or to conceal.

“ He declined entering into any explanation as to what might be the decision which he might think it right to take,” in the event of

any offer being made to him : and contented himself with “ declaring that in any such case, “ his decision would be founded upon an honest “ and impartial view of publick considerations “ alone, and that it would be determined, not by “ a calculation of interests, but by a balance “ and comparison of duties.”

Mr. Canning not only at this time (30th of August) had received no communication from the ministry, but he did not receive one until nine days \* more had elapsed ; and then it contained no specifick proposition, but was confined to the expression of a wish on the part of Lord Liverpool to see Mr. Canning as soon as possible.

The absence of the King in Scotland, and the supposed repugnance both of His Majesty and of some few members of the cabinet to Mr. Canning’s again becoming a member of it, are reasons more than sufficient to account for the delays. The observations in which the Lord Chancellor had indulged, when he fancied that Mr. Canning’s departure for India was certain,

\* A foolish story was inserted in the newspapers shortly after Mr. Canning’s death, giving an account of a conversation which he was supposed to have held on the 30th of August respecting an overture from the government, which he was said to have received on that day. The whole story is an invention. Mr. Canning received no communication from any member of the government till ten days subsequent to the 30th of August.

leads to a supposition that that learned Lord was one of the foremost in opposition ; since he could not but feel a little awkward at the prospect of Mr. Canning's again becoming his colleague in the cabinet.

Lord Eldon, it is believed, was not without coadjutors.

The firmness of Lord Liverpool, however, in declaring his determination not to continue the Premier, if he were not allowed to have the aid of Mr. Canning's services, soon overcame the objections of the dissentient Ministers.

The indisposition of the King to the arrangement, however, still remained to be subdued.

In the accomplishment of this work, it is supposed there was little difficulty. George the Fourth, indeed, was by far too patriotick a Prince, and too generous a Man, to allow his own personal feelings to interfere with what was essential to the interests of his Country. All, therefore, that it was necessary to do was to convince His Majesty that the publick weal required the aid of Mr. Canning's services ; *that* being done, His Majesty's resistance to the arrangement immediately ceased.

It was on the 8th of September that Lord Liverpool addressed a letter to Mr. Canning, requesting to see him. Mr. Canning received the letter at Birmingham on the 9th, and on the 11th he had an interview with Lord Liverpool.

At that interview, the entirety of Lord Londonderry's succession was offered to Mr. Canning ; but it was not without a conflict that he decided to accept the offer.

It is strictly true, that in taking this resolution he was exclusively influenced by the consideration of what he conceived to be his duty. Had he only consulted the dictates of his own inclination, his choice would, without doubt, have fallen upon India.

On the one hand the rule over that mighty Empire afforded to a mind, constituted like Mr. Canning's, an inexhaustible source of satisfaction and delight. In whatever plans he might have conceived for the amelioration of the lot of the millions under his care, he was sure not to have been thwarted either in their adoption, or their execution. The prospect of fame was before him, and he had the certainty of repairing a fortune (not his own), which, by the force of circumstances, he had been compelled to injure. These were the allurements which the government of India held out to him, allurements peculiarly calculated to fascinate a philosophical mind and an ambitious disposition.

On the other hand, if he accepted the Foreign Secretaryship, he was sure to be in a situation of extreme difficulty and annoyance.

In the Cabinet which he was about to join,

there were certain members who on some subjects held principles very different from his own.

He was not supported by the personal favour of the Sovereign.

If he found himself unable (as was far from impossible) to direct the policy of the government, he would be exposed to the alternative of sacrificing, either his character, by remaining in office, or his official existence (for which he was to give up India) by resigning.

The Foreign Affairs of the country, for the conduct of which he was to be more peculiarly responsible, presented any thing but an inviting aspect; and although the glory of regaining for Great Britain that moral influence in the scale of nations, which she had lost, was perhaps the fondest object of his ambition, yet he was very sensible that he would have to encounter not only difficulties abroad but vexation at home; that even were he to succeed to the utmost extent of his hopes, in the nature of the service, there was nothing which would be sufficiently striking to dazzle by its brilliancy, or to enable those employed in it to *make a reputation*.

The events which happen whilst nations are at peace are very frequently not less important to the happiness of mankind than those which occur in time of war; but for the most part they make less noise, are seldom even under-

stood by any considerable portion of the people, and, consequently, the actors in them are less known.

After the unparalleled manner in which the world had been so lately convulsed, little comparative honour was to be reaped from mingling, however usefully, in the more insipid transactions of succeeding times. "Ten years," said Mr. Canning, in answer to a letter from an intimate friend, congratulating him on his accession to office, "have made a world of difference, "and have prepared a very different sort of " 'world to bustle in,' from that which I should " have found in 1812. For fame, it is 'a " 'squeezed orange,' but for publick good, there " is something to do, and I will try, but it must " be, cautiously, to do it."

With feelings such as these, it is not extraordinary that the temptations of an Indian reign outweighed, in his estimation, those which were presented to him by office in England. But although he himself much preferred India, he was still true to the principle by which on every similar occasion he had been guided, that a public man, unless he can show cause of honour or duty to the contrary, is bound to accept any trust which he is selected, as competent, to administer for the general interest; and since he could not conscientiously think that either honour or duty opposed themselves to his accept-

ance of the offer which was made to him, he decided that it was his duty not to decline it.

At the time of his junction with the Cabinet, the majority of its members were Ultra Tories. Its numbers amounted to thirteen, exclusive of himself. Of these, the Ultra Toryism of the Lord Chancellor, the Duke of Wellington, Lords Bathurst, Westmorland, Maryborough, and Sidmouth, and Mr. Vansittart, was (with the exception of Lord Bathurst's sentiments on colonial slavery) unqualified by liberal opinions upon any subject whatever, of external or internal policy. Lord Melville, exclusively of his being in favour of the Catholick claims, agreed with his Ultra Colleagues. Lord Liverpool was the exact converse of Lord Melville, advocating liberal doctrines on every question but that of Catholick Emancipation. Lord Harrowby, Mr. Robinson, and Mr. Wynne, were anxious for concession to the Catholicks, and professed on other points liberal opinions. Mr. Peel held opinions nearer to those of his ultra, than any other of his, colleagues, with a mind, however, open to conviction.

But although the Cabinet was thus divided, it must not be supposed that no common bond of union existed between the two parties, since they were one and all united in opposing Reform, and in describing themselves as the followers of Mr. Pitt.



In this latter point of union, however, there was perhaps more of apparent than real concert, since the Ultra Tories and Liberal Tories differed widely in their interpretation of that Statesman's principles. The liberal party took the Mr. Pitt who lived previously to the French Revolution. The ultra party took the Mr. Pitt who lived in the time of that tremendous convulsion; and they argued that his conduct would have been the same when the dangers of it were gone by as it was during their continuance.

The three most influential members of this Cabinet were Lord Liverpool, the Duke of Wellington, and Mr. Peel.

Lord Liverpool was a man of very considerable talent, sound judgment, and unflinching integrity. By the mildness, yet firmness of his character, he was peculiarly well fitted for keeping together an administration, of which the component parts held somewhat discordant opinions. He was valuable to the Ultras, because he was anti-Catholick. He was valuable to the liberals, because he understood commercial principles. To Mr. Canning he was every thing: a personal friend, a warm admirer, a zealous coadjutor, a supporter of mild and conciliatory government, and above all, a cordial approver of his system of Foreign Policy.

The Duke of Wellington possessed military talents of the very highest order, and his good

fortune had afforded him the most favourable opportunities for their display. After gaining great victories over justly-celebrated commanders in Spain, it at last fell to his lot to contend with the most wonderful genius that ever lived, when he obtained a triumph, the brilliancy of which eclipsed all his former exploits. Had this great General's warlike abilities been tenfold greater than they were, he still might never have acquired glory, equal to that which he has now secured, by having conquered such an antagonist as Napoleon. By his successes in Spain, and at Waterloo, he saved his country from ruin, and the world from bondage. The performer of deeds so mighty must ever have had great weight and influence in whatever councils he was engaged.

Without entering into His Grace's qualifications as a Statesman, it will answer every purpose simply to remark, that, at the moment when his campaigns were concluded, he found Lord Castlereagh directing the Foreign Policy of Great Britain, and that he resolved to support that Minister. Mr. Canning, therefore, on entering into office, found him strongly predisposed towards the policy of the "Continental School;" and, consequently, had little to expect from the cordial co-operation, and not a little to dread from the powerful opposition, of the Duke of Wellington.

Mr. Peel was a Statesman whose conduct had been marked by consistency, and had been distinguished, for the most part, by judgment, but 'always by moderation.' He was free from any feelings of jealousy towards Mr. Canning, whose junction with the Government he certainly facilitated.

Upon the whole, therefore, it appears that the power of the ultra-Tory party was very considerable. Nevertheless, Mr. Canning hoped that his own exertions, supported by Lord Liverpool, would enable him to carry whatever measures he might think essential. At any rate, he thought it his duty to make the attempt, and, accordingly, as has been already stated, consented to join the Ministry, with the firm and avowed intention of resigning his office, in the event of his finding himself unable to carry his own views into execution. .

## CHAP. III.

**MR. CANNING'S "SYSTEM" OF POLICY. — DISCUSSIONS AT VERONA RESPECTING SPAIN — DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN SPAIN AND GREAT BRITAIN WITH REGARD TO THE CONDUCT OF SPANISH AUTHORITIES IN THE NEW WORLD.**

**MR. CANNING** received the Seals of Office from the King on the 16th of September, 1822; and perhaps at no one period of our history did the misery or the happiness of the World depend so entirely on the course of Foreign Policy which England should think proper to adopt.

On the one hand, the power of the Holy Alliance had arrived at a most formidable height; and the avowed principles by which that power was to be directed, were so utterly subversive of all freedom, and so hostile to the spirit and temper of the age, that the suspicions, which under any circumstances must necessarily attach to such an overgrown Colossus, became doubled,

by the manner in which it seemed determined to use the strength which it had acquired.

. But if those who were determined to support the obsolete principle of the Divine Right of Kings, and the arbitrary doctrines which may be deduced from it, had grown so prodigiously in might; the opposite doctrines had been gradually working their way, and acquiring great numbers of proselytes. For although England was no longer looked upon with that admiration that she had once inspired, still the mighty deeds which she had so recently achieved were not entirely effaced from the recollection of the world. The example, indeed, of her free Constitution had created a very general opinion, that Nations under the absolute sway of a single individual enjoy a smaller portion of happiness than those, in which the Prerogatives of the Crown are limited by the Privileges of the People.

The two principles recognised by the British Constitution, 1st, That the people are the origin of power; 2d, That the object of all government is the good of the governed; had taken deep root in the minds of the European Publick. Of these two principles, the truth of the first the Alliance openly denied; while their actions seemed too clearly to imply their doubt of the correctness of the second. Thus the European Continent was divided into two great parties, professing principles diametrically opposite to, and indeed incompatible with, each other.

It is obvious, that, for the best interests of humanity, both sides should be brought to relax something in their pretensions. Their forces were nearly balanced. The supporters of ultra-monarchical principles had the advantage of being in the actual possession of authority; while the superiority of the advocates of popular principles consisted in their greatly outnumbering their adversaries.

The event to be dreaded from such a state of things, was an universal collision between the two parties.

The object to be sought, was the prevention of popular tumults on the one hand, and of arbitrary and oppressive conduct on the other.

The aim of the Holy Alliance, was both to repress entirely all manifestations of liberal opinions, and to extinguish (vain hope!) the feelings that excited them. True indeed, in respect to the first, they might for a time have been successful; but when at last the tyranny became insupportable, and the compressing force, (their armies) by being infected with the same principles, had become less efficient, a fearful reaction would have taken place. Europe would have been convulsed from one end to the other; and whatever Thrones the desolation of vengeance might leave, would have been stripped of their attributes, and shaken to their centres.

In this posture of affairs, Mr. Canning saw

his way, and at once conceived a "system" which would be consistent with the honour, the dignity, and the happiness of his country.

The Holy Alliance was to be annihilated, and instead of the interests of that Union of European Sovereigns being made the main consideration in British policy, the interests of Great Britain herself, were what, as a British statesman, Mr. Canning determined more particularly to consult. It was not, however, that he thought that the aggrandizement of Great Britain ought to be sought at the expense of other Powers. On the contrary, he said that "her prosperity must contribute to the prosperity of "surrounding Nations, and her stability to the "safety of the World."

But it was in contradistinction to the doctrines of Universal Philanthropy, and equally so to their opposite extreme, the doctrines of Legitimacy and Divine Right, which had given birth to the Holy-Alliance scheme of amalgamating the different interests of separate States, and of binding their Monarchs, as Monarchs, to each other, instead of uniting them as Protectors to their own dominions; that he asserted that the interests of his own native land, are those to which above all others a Statesman should attend.

Still it was not by any violent transition from a practice of support to a system of active opposition to that Alliance, that he could have safely

brought about any salutary results. A sudden change from one side to the other, would infallibly, by raising the hopes of the democratical party, have excited them to outrage, and have thus produced the very evil which it was intended to prevent. But, no: the dissolution of the Alliance was to be effected, gradually, by the withdrawal from it of the countenance of England; and the balance was to be held "not only between contending Nations, but between conflicting principles," giving the preponderance to neither, but aiding rather the liberal side, because the anti-liberals were then the strongest.

This, then, is the key of Mr. Canning's policy, the foundation of the "system" which he adopted. And in perusing the history of his measures, the reader should always bear in mind this, the grand principle by which those measures were directed.

Before, however, commencing that History, it may be well to point out the fallacy of some observations respecting Mr. Canning, which from want of an accurate recollection of facts have more than once been made. It has been said, and very justly, that not only is the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs responsible for the Foreign Policy of the country, (of which, however, be it remembered, he is supposed to be the originator and director,) but all his col-



leagues, to whose judgment his measures are submitted, share that responsibility. How, then, it is asked, could Mr. Canning have been a member, as he was, of a Cabinet whose Foreign Policy led to consequences so fraught with danger both to England and the world, and at the same time throw off from his own shoulders all responsibility for those consequences?

If he foresaw them, why did he sanction by his counsels the measures that led to them? If he did not foresee them, why then he was no wiser than the rest?

The answer to all this will be apparent, on enquiring what measures, productive of such consequences, were taken by the British Cabinet while he was a member of it?

It will doubtless be recollected that the two periods when the conduct of the Foreign Policy of this country was most disastrous were, those of the first Congress at Vienna — and those of the Congress of Troppau, which was adjourned to Laybach. During the intermediate time few important measures on this subject were submitted to the Cabinet.

On the ~~first~~ occasion, viz. that of the Vienna Congress, Mr. Canning was not a member of the Administration. When he joined it, the treaties concluded at Vienna had been ratified, and sanctioned by Parliament; and disapproving, as he undoubtedly did, of those arrangements, he

would not, after their final settlement, on any consideration, have attempted to disturb them; and *all* his declarations respecting them, after he became Foreign Secretary, concurred in the necessity of maintaining the settlement of Europe agreed upon at that Congress. "The pervading principles," (he observed in a despatch to our Ambassador in Russia, in 1825,) "of that intimate union by which the Emperor of Russia and the King, our Master, are bound together, in common with their other Allies, are those established by the Treaties of Vienna, viz. the preservation of general peace, and the maintenance against all ambition and encroachment of the existing territorial distribution of Europe. To these principles His Majesty has vowed an inviolable fidelity. No temptation that could be held out to His Majesty could induce him to depart from them for any advantage of his own."

But, it may be said, that part of the very time that Lord Castlereagh was acting in the way of which Mr. Canning disapproved, he was in official connection with him, since he held the office of Ambassador at Lisbon. But he had accepted this post before Lord Castlereagh went to the Congress, and of course before he knew what would be done there. And was he, because he thought that Lord Castlereagh had not consulted the interests of his country at Vienna, was he, at once, *on that account*, to throw up his

situation, and to say, that he would not further her interests in Portugal any longer, because Lord Castlereagh had mismanaged them elsewhere? In point of fact, however, Mr. Canning had resigned on other grounds, and his resignation had been accepted, long before the most important decisions of the Vienna Congress had been taken, and, consequently, long before they could have been either known to himself, or have transpired to the world.

Weighty considerations there were (as has been already explained, on account of the domestick affairs of the Empire, which determined him to accept office on his return from Lisbon. Whatever evils were to result from the Vienna Treaties were then only to be endured, for the deeds were done, and could not be remedied. A question irrevocably settled, although settled in a way of which he did not approve, could have been no bar to his joining a Government with whom he agreed on all other points. During the years that he remained in office, the internal condition far outweighed in importance the Foreign Relations of the Empire ; and before the Congress at Troppau had been convoked, and consequently before any question could have arisen as to the course that it would be fitting for this country to pursue there, he had ceased to be a member of the Government.

But if the doctrine that the responsibility for all great measures of Foreign Policy rests on all

the members of the Cabinet be true, as it unquestionably is, it may be well to remember that the last publick declaration \* of the principles of the Cabinet, previously to Mr. Canning's ceasing to take part in its deliberations, was made in a confidential minute of the Foreign Secretary, which was communicated to the Allied Courts, in answer to some observations of the Court of St. Petersburg, in which "the charging any  
 "ostensible conference with commission to de-  
 "liberate on the affairs of Spain" was strongly deprecated; — in which "the notion of revising,  
 "limiting, or regulating the course of experi-  
 "ments of casting anew their governments, in  
 "which several States of Europe were then  
 "engaged, either by foreign force or foreign  
 "council," was said to be, "as dangerous to  
 "avow as impossible to execute;" — in which the Alliance is described as "never to have been  
 "intended as an union for the government of  
 "the World, or for the superintendence of the  
 "internal affairs of other States;" — and in which it is distinctly declared, that "this Coun-  
 "try could not, and would not, act upon  
 "abstract and speculative principles of precau-  
 "tion;" — "that the existing Allianc† had had  
 "no such purpose in view in its original form-  
 "ation, was never so explained to Parliament,

\* May 1820.

† Viz. the quintuple alliance between England, France, Russia, Prussia, and Austria.

“ and if it had, would, most assuredly, never have  
 “ received its sanction ;” — “ that it would be a  
 “ breach of faith were the Ministers of the  
 “ Crown to acquiesce in such a construction  
 “ of it, or were to suffer themselves to be be-  
 “ trayed into a course of measures, inconsistent  
 “ with the principles which they avowed at the  
 “ time, and which they had since maintained,  
 “ both at home and abroad.”

This was language for which Mr. Canning was always ready to take his full share of responsibility, and to which, when he came into office, he acted up, both in spirit and in letter.

The fault, indeed, in Lord Londonderry's policy was not in the tone of the official documents which he put forth to the world, or the speeches which he delivered in Parliament, but in his not taking care to make his measures accord with his principles.

For how is it to be accounted for, that effects essentially different were produced by actions professedly regulated by the same rules, and described in the same terms? and how should it occur that a line of policy completely at variance with Lord Castlereagh's should be ascribed to Mr. Canning, while both adopted the same language? But, however that may have been, so satisfied was he with the tenour of this note, and so completely was it in accordance with his own views, that, at the time when he assumed the direction of our Foreign

Affairs, he was content to adopt as his own all the doctrines which it contained. Whether or not Mr. Canning had any hand in the drawing up of this particular paper, cannot be positively affirmed; but Lord Londonderry himself would, perhaps, scarcely have denied that there had been occasions on which he had received assistance from Mr. Canning.

As soon as Mr. Canning had received the seals of office, besides the less urgent questions of the Slave Trade, and the Russian Ukase concerning the North-West Coast of America, the following ones pressed themselves immediately upon his attention: — 1st, The state of the relations between Turkey and Russia, complicated as those relations were by the Greek insurrection; — 2d, The state of the relations between France and Spain; — 3d, The state of our own relations with Spain, connected as they were with those between Spain and her revolted Colonies; — and, 4th, the language to be held by the Representative of this country at the Congress at Vienna, which was subsequently adjourned to Verona.

The direct object to be had in view respecting the first two questions, was to bring them to a settlement, without the intervention of war. The indirect object respecting the last was, so to shape our conduct as should, without giving ground for offence, nevertheless make it operate incidentally to diminish the power and

nullify the mischief likely to result from the principles professed by the Alliance.

Undoubtedly, the most effectual means of attaining this latter end would have been, to have declined sending any Plenipotentiary at all to the Congress, and to have confined the exertions of the British Government to separate consultations with Russia on her affairs with the Porte; and with France, on her affairs with Spain. But the British Government had been pledged by Lord Londonderry to take part in these deliberations of the Allies; and the nonfulfilment of that pledge would have been an impossible, or, if possible, an injudicious mode of proceeding.

Since the question between France and Spain was that which eventually engrossed, almost entirely, the attention of the Congress, it is one the history of which must be first narrated.

On the death of Lord Londonderry, who was to have been the English representative at the Congress, the instructions which he had drawn up for himself were transferred by the Cabinet to the Duke of Wellington, who left London a few days after Mr. Canning had entered upon the duties of his new office. It was at first hoped by Mr. Canning, that the British Plenipotentiary would only have been present at the Congress held at Vienna, the existing state of affairs between Russia and the Porte, being what was there to have formed the principal topick of

deliberation; that question having been disposed of, the members of the Congress, with the exception of the British Minister, were to have adjourned to Verona, there to sit in judgment on the Italian Peninsula. Owing, however, to the indisposition of the Duke of Wellington, his journey was so long delayed, that the time allotted for the sojourning of the Congress at Vienna had nearly expired before the Duke arrived in that capital.

Notwithstanding the wish of Mr. Canning, if possible, to have avoided having an English Minister at Verona, in order to mark to the world, that England was not among those who interfered with the independence of the Italian States, yet, as there was no time left for conferences between the Duke's arrival at Vienna, and the departure of the Allied Sovereigns for Italy, it became advisable that His Grace should proceed with them to Verona, which he accordingly did.

At the time of his departure from London, the belief of the Government, and consequently that of Mr. Canning, was, that Russia and Turkey, and Italy were the only important points that were intended to be taken into consideration. It was, therefore, with somewhat of surprise that Mr. Canning was informed by the Duke of Wellington, that from a conversation with M. de Villèle, which the Duke had held



with that Minister when at Paris, in his way to Vienna, it appeared that the French Ministers intended to call upon the Congress to come to some decision before its separation on the position of France towards Spain.

It appeared, that since the alarm of the infectious fever, France had been collecting an army in the South, fully equipped for active service; that although the numbers on the frontier were not more than were necessary to discharge the duties of the "Cordon Sanitaire," yet that there was a force behind, which, together with that on the frontier, amounted to 100,000 men, and which could easily, and quickly be united. There can be little doubt that the army, thus assembled by the French Cabinet, was formed without due deliberation and concert on the part of all its members. While M. de Montmorency, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, an emigrant, and an ultra, was at the head of the war party in the Ministry, urging preparations for the commencement of hostilities, the First Minister was led into consenting to those preparations without sufficiently weighing the embarrassments which they might produce. The army, thus improvidently collected, it was equally dangerous to employ, or to disband. M. de Villèle, in truth, well aware of the great danger of using it for the purpose for which it was brought together, was

unwilling to employ it in an attack on Spain, and was yet equally unwilling to expose the Government to the disgrace of dispersing it without a blow, after the expectations which had been raised by its collection. But M. de Montmorency, eager against all revolutions, only wished to force his colleague into turning it against Spain. Both these Ministers, therefore, were anxious to obtain the opinion of the Allies; the Foreign Secretary, in the hope that that opinion would be in favour of war; and M. de Villèle, because, though rather inclined to wish for a peaceable resolution, he felt that the responsibility of war would be considerably lessened, if the Allies gave their sanction to the measure. The opinion of the King of France apparently coincided with that of M. de Villèle: but he was perhaps more sensibly alive to the hazard of keeping so large a body of men long together, in a state of inaction, when there was abroad such a spirit of dislike towards his person, and dynasty.

When Mr. Canning learnt that it was the intention of the French Government to solicit the expression of an opinion from the Congress, and also ascertained that the representative of that Government was bent on procuring an avowal of the determination of the Allies to interfere forcibly in the affairs of Spain, as well as that

the dispositions of the Allies leaned the same way, he immediately instructed the Duke of Wellington, that "if a declaration of any such determination should be made at Verona, come what might, he should refuse the King's consent to become a party to it," even though "the dissolution of the Alliance should be the consequence of the refusal." It was, in truth, high time to convince the members of the Alliance, that England would take whatever course she thought right, independently of their will and pleasure; for, to such a pitch of confidence had they arrived, that only two days before this despatch was written, the Ministers of the four Courts called *in a body* on Mr. Canning, to remonstrate with him against the appointment of Sir William à Court as the King's Minister to Madrid, on account of the countenance that his presence would give to the Constitutional Government. Mr. Canning, thinking it better to treat such expostulations lightly, than to flatter them into importance, by any indignant observations, contented himself, in reply to this remonstrance, with simply saying, that, as Sir William à Court must by that time have entered upon his functions at Madrid, it was useless in any way to discuss the propriety of sending him to that capital.

Shortly after the Duke arrived at Vienna,

Mr. Canning's instructions reached him : at the time of his receiving them, the views and intentions of the French Government on the Spanish question had not been disclosed to the Alliance ; respecting which question, at that moment, there was a wide difference of opinion between the Courts of Russia, and Austria. The latter, however anxious it might be to overturn the then existing order of things in Spain, could not have been willing to incur the risk of any military operations, which might either bring a Russian army through the Austrian dominions, or end in the occupation of the Peninsula by a French force.

The former, on the other hand, strenuously desired an armed interference, intending that that interference should be carried into execution, at least, in part, by Russian troops. His Imperial Majesty seemed bent on this plan ; for the adoption of which he must have found powerful motives, in his disapprobation of constitutional principles, in the bad example which the mere existence of a system founded on mutiny afforded, and in the probable inconvenience of not giving employment to the Russian army, which was much discontented with the pacifick policy towards Turkey. The Emperor's views were however somewhat disconcerted before his departure from Vienna, by doubts as to

whether the French Government would refuse their consent to the passage of a Russian army through the French territory: this consideration served His Imperial Majesty with subject-matter for meditation during his journey from that city to Verona. On his arrival at which last-mentioned place, it became evident that his opinions had become somewhat modified; and that his hopes were then apparently confined to the collection of an army of observation somewhere in the south-western part of Europe: whereby he would have been in readiness to aid France in her attack on the Peninsula, in case of its failure, either through the reverses or the disloyalty of her troops: and the double purpose of occupying the Russian army, and of intimidating the revolutionists of Europe, would have been completely effected.

These humbler designs of the Russian Emperor were, however, checked by the opposition of the Duke of Wellington, in which he was feebly seconded by the Emperor of Austria and his Ministers, who adhered to their original opinions. The Prussians followed in the wake of Austria.

Such respecting Spain, were the feelings of the different parties who were present at the conference, at which the French Minister, M. de Montmorency, explained the views and position

of his Government towards that country. The first half of his statement consisted of an account of the transactions between the King of Spain and the Spanish Royalists on the one part, and of the French Government on the other; and the latter half consisted of a few remarks, prefatory to the delivery of a paper which contained the three following questions : —

1. “ In case France should find herself under  
“ the necessity of recalling her Minister from  
“ Madrid, and of breaking off all diplomatick  
“ relations with Spain, would the high Courts  
“ be disposed to adopt the like measures, and to  
“ recall their respective missions ?

2. “ Should war break out between France  
“ and Spain, under what form, and by what acts,  
“ would the high Powers afford to France, that  
“ moral support which would give to her mea-  
“ sures the weight and authority of the Alliance,  
“ and inspire a salutary dread into the revolu-  
“ tionists of all countries ?

3. “ What, in short, was the intention of the  
“ high Powers, as to the extent and the form of  
“ the effective assistance (*‘secours matériels’*)  
“ which they would be disposed to give to France  
“ in case active interference should, on her de-  
“ mand, become necessary ?”

The propounding of these three questions by the French Minister must have been a source of

infinite satisfaction to the Emperor Alexander, since they afforded him so fair a pretext for the execution of his favourite project. Immediately on the receipt of the French paper, he avowed his readiness to consent to all the terms proposed in it, and to conclude a treaty stipulating for the succours which he should furnish. He at the same time stated, that those succours should be given in the shape of an army of 150,000 men, which he would march through Germany, and station in Piedmont. The English Plenipotentiary made no secret of what his answer would be, and in conjunction with the Austrian Minister, forcibly exposed the dangers to which such a proceeding on the part of Russia would expose the French Government; insinuating, as it would, if done by its consent, either that the French Ministers thought France was unable to cope with Spain, or else that they mistrusted the fidelity of their troops:—the first of which insinuations, by throwing a doubt upon the military abilities of France, was certain to hurt the *amour propre* of a people so peculiarly jealous of their military glory; the second it would have been the height of imprudence to proclaim. But His Imperial Majesty was difficult to be convinced: and it is no wonder that he was unwilling to throw aside so reasonable a pretence for the accomplishment of a favourite purpose.

Similar efforts were made, and fortunately with better success, to impress with a full sense of the danger the French Plenipotentiary, who, having at first been inclined to think that France would derive great advantage in her discussions with Spain, from the presence of a Russian army in Piedmont, had expressed much admiration of the chivalrous spirit of the Russian Emperor. M. de Montmorency, however, being converted, did in consequence strongly represent the extreme injury which would probably accrue to the French Government from the march of any Russian troops to the South of Europe. But such representations, even though urged in earnestness and truth, were more than counterbalanced by the French questions respecting war, which, being already put, could not be retracted; and which gave an advantage to the Emperor in the furtherance of his design, which advantage it was hardly to be expected that he would surrender.

But, if these queries were a source of satisfaction to Alexander, they were most embarrassing to Austria; calling upon Her to give replies, which, however constructed, must necessarily have sanctioned some measures, of which She must have trembled at the consequences.

An hostile aggression by France on Spain, whether successful or unsuccessful, Austria had



almost equally strong reasons to deprecate. If successful, those Countries would be, for a time at least, closely united : — a state of things so repugnant to the supposed ancient interests of the House of Hapsburgh, that it could not, under any circumstances, be contemplated without jealousy, or indeed be submitted to without dishonour ; — but, if accomplished with Austrian sanction, it would be still harder to reconcile to Austrian pride, conniving, as it would appear to be, at its own humiliation : — if unsuccessful, the almost infallible consequences would have been, a revolutionary re-action in France, which would probably have spread throughout the greater part of the European Continent. But if these were strong reasons for opposing the invasion of Spain, there were not wanting even stronger in its favour.

The strong dislike of the Austrian Government, not only to all revolutionary, but to all constitutional, even though legitimate Governments, would probably have induced it, either to hazard much, or to sacrifice something for the destruction of the then existing order of things in Spain. But, in addition to this, what was more immediately calculated to operate, was the feeling that, if the Emperor of Russia had not the appearance at least of occupation in the West of Europe, until the publick mind in Russia upon the

Turkish and Greek questions should have become calm, His Imperial Majesty would have returned to his capital displeased with the Alliance, of which the first effects would have been felt by Austria. Since this last consideration was the one which pressed hardest at the moment, and since the Austrian Premier, however shrewd and clever, was not in the habit of looking very far before him, so perhaps it was the one which, added to the strong bias of his mind against the Spanish Constitution, determined the point of shaping the reply of his Government to the French queries, in the way that should best suit the plans of the Russian Cabinet.

The Prussian Court continued to participate in the Austrian sentiments, and to act accordingly.

The three Powers, therefore, in their official notes, consented to grant all the countenance and succours which were in fact required by the French questions. Both the Russian and Austrian Ambassadors, however, suggested the necessity of a treaty, in order that the cases of succour might be distinctly defined; the object of the Emperor of Russia probably being, to have something tangible to show to his people, as an excuse for not attacking Turkey; — and that of Prince Metternich being, to keep within as narrow limits as possible, the grounds for French interference.

The answer of the British Plenipotentiary in conformity with his instructions, was very different from those of the other Members of the Alliance.

He dwelt upon the determination of the English Government not to intermeddle in the internal concerns of independent States, and on the certain risks and probable disasters that would be the result of such interference in the present instance. He positively refused to give the smallest countenance to the imagination of a case, on which, should it occur, he might be called upon to pledge his Government to eventual co-operation, and concert; and concluded by exposing the groundlessness of the alarms of any hostile attack of Spain upon France, which the French Plenipotentiary pleaded in defence of his proceedings.

This decided language on the part of the Duke of Wellington, coupled with doubts as to how far the signature of the treaty, proposed by the other Allies, might be approved by his Government, since it might be placed in difficulties by an entire separation from England, again shook the resolution of M. de Montmorency; who, although evidently looking, by gaining the support of the violent ultra party in France, to re-establish despotism in Spain by French means, yet could not have helped doubting the effect

which such a treaty would have upon the other parties in the Chambers: it appears that he declined to sign one.

Whilst conflicting considerations were thus operating to produce vacillation in the French and Austrian Councils, it is curious enough that all parties at the Congress were professing their anxiety that war might not ensue. Of these, the English and Prussian plenipotentiaries were, doubtless, sincere: the Austrians seemed sincere at one moment, and insincere at another, accordingly as each particular consideration prevailed: but the good faith of the French and Russian declarations would seem to have been in the highest degree equivocal. Since peace, however, was on the lips of all, it gave rise to propositions, calculated to keep up at least the appearance of sincerity. One of these was, that France should employ the good offices of one of the Allies at Madrid, a plan which M. de Montmorency rejected, because there was no positive ground of dispute. He, however, gladly availed himself of a proposal (as a sort of middle course) made by Austria after the several answers had been given in, that "the Allies should hold  
" towards Spain a common language, in separate  
" notes, but uniform in their principles and  
" their object."

This scheme was at first adopted by the

Allies, and was virtually indeed carried into execution, although the notes were subsequently changed into despatches, as being less offensive in their form.

When these documents were drawn up, they were communicated to the English Minister, who took the opportunity of again pointing out the impolicy of their being forwarded to their destination. He said, that, if the preservation of peace were, as was professed, the common wish, no measures could be pursued more likely to defeat it, calculated as “they were, to cause the  
 “discontinuance of diplomattick relations between the three allied Courts and Spain, as  
 “well as to irritate the Spanish Government, by  
 “affording ground for the belief that advantage  
 “had been taken of the angry feelings existing  
 “between France and Spain, to call down upon  
 “the latter the power of the Alliance; that the  
 “English Government would not only not hold a  
 “common language with the Allies, but would  
 “refrain from making any communication with  
 “the Spanish Government, on the subject of its  
 “relations with Spain; and, lastly, that His Majesty’s exertions would be confined to endeavouring to allay the ferment which these  
 “communications would occasion at Madrid.”

These representations of the Duke of Wellington failed in producing all their effect in

changing the purpose of the Allies. The French and Russian influence indeed would have been too strong for the Austrian and Prussian Courts to resist, even if other causes had not operated to induce consent. But there can be no doubt that, had it not been for the manly language thus held by the Duke, these despatches would (as admitted by M. de Montmorency) have been worded in a manner, which would have amounted to a hostile declaration. After the course intended to be pursued by England was declared, the Allies consulted on the affairs of Spain, without the English Plenipotentiary. At one of these consultations, what was called a *Procès Verbal* was agreed upon by the Allies, defining the *Casus Fœderis* which should entitle France to their succour : —

1st. In case of an attack made by Spain on France.

2d. Of any outrage on the person of the King or Royal Family of Spain.

3d. Of any attempt to change the Dynasty of that Kingdom.

This *Procès Verbal* was the last act of the Congress on Spanish affairs, although some further subsequent discussions respecting them took place which are not unimportant.

At one of them, the following questions were put by the British Plenipotentiary : — Whether,

if the effect of the despatches should be to produce war, and if the war so produced should end in the subjugation of Spain, it was intended to occupy Spain with any armed force; and if it were, the troops of what nation or nations were to compose it? To this all the Plenipotentiaries returned evasive answers; but the Austrian Plenipotentiaries in their answer, did not seem to consider otherwise than with complacency the idea of French troops being the occupying force, whatever might have been their real opinion of such a mode of occupation. At another discussion (the last), held just previously to the Duke's departure, the Allied Ministers, and particularly the French Minister, requested that Sir William à Court should be instructed to do all in his power to allay the ferment at Madrid, and to preserve peace. A singular request, considering that the ferment which they professed to wish that Sir William à Court should allay was of their own exciting, and the peace which he was to preserve was only in danger of being broken by their own measures!

Such is the curious history of the deliberations of this celebrated Congress on the most important subject that occupied its attention; from which it would seem that the singular fact may be deduced, that only two parties concerned in

them, England and Russia, pursued throughout a fixed and unvaried plan of conduct, with a view to the attainment of a determinate object.

The purposes of the Emperor of Russia, from the beginning to the end, were apparently uniform. The first, being to find occupation for his own troops; the next, being to subvert the Constitutional Government of Spain by force of arms.

The objects of the British Plenipotentiary were likewise throughout consistent, and intelligible. They were, first, to prevent any corporate act of force or menace, on the part of the Alliance, against Spain; next, to preserve peace between that Country and France; and, lastly, to convince the Alliance that England would not countenance their conduct.

The Austrian Government had, perhaps, no fixed desire, with the exception perhaps of the one to overthrow the Spanish Government; a desire, it appears, however, by no means so paramount as to outweigh all other considerations. Its sentiments, varied accordingly as each separate consideration predominated. It seemed to dread, first, the permanent triumph of revolutionary principles; next, the occupation of Spain by France; thirdly, the passage of a Russian army through the Austrian States; fourthly, the inter-



ference of Russia in the affairs of Turkey ; and, lastly, the displeasure of the Emperor of Russia, if His Imperial Majesty should go back discontented to his dominions. It dreaded all the evils, and all the remedies.

The fear, therefore, of witnessing the lasting success of revolution, probably prevented a decided opposition to the attack meditated by France on Spain ; and the dread of the displeasure of the Russian Autocrat, and of his turning his arms against Turkey, if not otherwise employed, appeared to prevent a decided opposition to the march of that army to the South of Europe : while a dislike of both these measures must have been the obstacle to a cordial approbation being given to either.

The French Minister's aim, at first, was to obtain the sanction of the Alliance to a war with Spain, and next the armed assistance of its Members ; and then, when he had made some progress towards procuring this help, perhaps from thinking that he had gone too far, he tried to retrace his steps.

The Prussian Government, if it dreaded revolution, must have dreaded still more a war which might in time become general ; its immediate object must have been to keep on the best terms with its powerful neighbours, and it successively

adopted the vacillating opinions of the Austrian Minister.

The result of this clashing of interests and infirmity of purpose was, that no one party was completely successful, though the English were more so than the others. They were, indeed, unable to prevent the sending of the despatch to the Ministers of the three Courts at Madrid, by which the chances of the continuance of peace were diminished ; but they did prevent a corporate declaration of war, which, had it not been for the dread of the steps which England might take, would beyond a doubt have been conceded in the outset by Austria and Prussia to the wishes of the Russian Cabinet, and the demands of the French Minister.

They likewise succeeded in alarming the Alliance, as to how far it might be able to accomplish the ends at which it aimed.

The Russian Monarch was unable to find employment for his army, and was likewise unable to assure himself that, some way or other, an attempt would be made to overturn the Spanish Constitution.

Whether the Austrian Prime Minister had better grounds for congratulation at the way in which the labours of the Congress terminated than his French and Russian Colleagues, is doubtful.

The Emperor Alexander certainly did not return home contented ; the probable invasion of Spain by the French alone, was not prevented nor even retarded ; and the Austrian territories were not absolutely secured against the unwelcome intrusion of a Russian army. To counterbalance, however, all these annoyances, there was the blow levelled at liberal principles, in the insult offered to a newly-established Constitution : but if this were a source of consolation, it was not without its alloy ; for in the language of the British Cabinet were evidently to be traced the seeds of disunion, too likely to end in the dissolution of the Alliance.

As for Prussia, she had no particular reason to be pleased with what was ultimately decided upon ; for, had her interests been consulted, no discussions would have been entered into respecting Spain ; avoiding them altogether would have been the best means of preserving peace, which she must have chiefly desired ; for if the question were gone into, consistency compelled the Allies to hold the same language to Spain which in the preceding year they had held to Naples and Sardinia.

During these transactions at Verona, where the French Plenipotentiary was urging measures directly tending to produce a war with Spain, the head of the French Government was holding

the most pacifick language, and declaring that the King, Royal Family, and Council of Ministers were unanimous in their wish to avoid a rupture. It was evident, therefore, if M. de Villèle were sincere in what he said, and there is no reason to doubt that he was so, either that M. de Montmorency was ignorant of the opinions of his colleagues, or else that he was acting in defiance of them. However that might be, it is certain that M. de Montmorency's language, as the Congress drew near to its conclusion, was more moderate than it had been at its commencement.

But while the French Minister at Verona (at any rate not disavowed by his Government) was endeavouring to fan the embers of discord into a flame, and imagining hypothetical grounds of justification for the commencement of hostilities with Spain, from the want of any real substantial grievances, there can be no doubt that the French Government were actually giving encouragement and assistance to the bands of factions that were in arms in Navarre and Arragon, against the Spanish Constitutional Government, which same bands French intrigues and French gold had excited to rebellion.

Although the civil war thus raised necessarily tended to increase the distraction and misery which prevailed throughout that kingdom, yet

it was only one more misfortune added to a cup already overflowing.

Perhaps there never was a country that had once stood so high in the scale of nations, which fell to such a state of degradation in so short a period.

Thirty years back, Spain was one of the most powerful empires in Europe ; and although viewed at a distance, the recollections of her former greatness, her successful opposition to foreign invasion, and the struggle for liberty in which she was then engaged, all contributed to create an illusion as to her then condition ; yet it was an illusion that was soon dispelled by closer observation. By an eye-witness, nothing of wisdom, little of patriotism, little of talent, could be discovered, although what little there did exist was ranged on the Constitutional side. With the exception, therefore, of some six or seven individuals (and those the only ones out of a whole nation), it might be truly said, that the many were nugatory from their indifference — the few, useless from their corruption. A total want of force, moral as well as physical, was evident on all sides ; and if a given task was to be executed, the means employed were sure to be wholly inadequate to the ends proposed to be attained by them. The only thing like a general feeling that really seemed to exist, was the

fear of a return to the ancient order of things ; but even this, if traced to its source, was not so much a horror of despotism itself, as of despotism in the hands of Ferdinand, and was, more perhaps than any thing else, a question of guarantee for personal security.

There was no devotion to the Constitution. The necessity of modifying it, indeed, was admitted on all hands ; but so distrustful were all parties of each other, and so doubtful of the King, that there was little or no hope of any modifications being effected.

The finances were in a deplorable state of exhaustion, and all the great sources of national prosperity, from which they might have been recruited, dried up, some of them past recall. Commerce was annihilated, agriculture was neglected, and the colonies were lost. The demoralization of the people, and the extinction of their energy, took away the hope of a speedy regeneration. Every where symptoms of a general dissolution of society manifested themselves ; — one part of the country refusing to obey the Government, because it was not sufficiently revolutionary, — another, plunged into civil war, under the pretence of restoring to absolute power a perjured Sovereign, but, in reality, only fighting for gain : the soldiers of the Royalist ranks of to-day being found amongst the Constitutionals of to-morrow, according as

either side afforded the strongest temptations of pay or plunder.

Such was the frightful picture of ruin which Spain presented to the eyes of those who themselves examined into her real situation ; and to this awful condition was she reduced by the tyranny of priestcraft, and the abuse of despotism : for despotism alone would not have produced effects so disastrous.

But although this description is no exaggeration of what was the real situation of Spain, yet it could not be doubted, that the best chance she had of recovering from this abyss of degradation was, by being left to herself, to work out a cure for the evils which afflicted her. Certainly, the worst that could have happened to her would have been the restoration of that order of things to which almost entirely her present misfortunes were to be attributed. For the sake of humanity, therefore, if not of justice, she ought to have been left alone ; and, as has been shewn, to secure her being left alone, all the efforts of Mr. Canning's policy were directed. But while we were fighting in the cause of Spanish independence at Verona, the state of our mutual relations compelled us, at the same time, to fight our own battles at Madrid.

The outrages that were daily committing on English commerce by the Colonial Authorities,

that still acknowledged the supremacy of the Mother Country, and which had been going on for several years, were arrived at that pitch that they were no longer to be borne. — “ The “ archives of the British Mission at Madrid contained a long list of such grievances, sometimes justified, or palliated, by the Spanish Ministers, sometimes admitted and regretted, but in no one instance satisfactorily redressed. “ The mere existence of such a catalogue of injuries committed against the subjects of a friendly Power, and that Power the one to whose exertions and sacrifices the Spanish Monarchy owed its preservation, was as discreditable to the Government which had inflicted or connived at them, as it would have been to that which, after having exhausted every amicable effort to obtain justice, should have continued patiently to submit to the denial of it.”

Mr. Canning therefore thought that the period was arrived when such submission should cease.

And, since the Spanish Ministers, when pressed by similar representations, had invariably contrived to elude them by references to authorities, and promises of investigation, Sir William à Court was instructed, Oct. 18. 1822, to require “ *instant atonement*,” in the case of the condemnation of the Lord Collingwood, which happened to be one, of which “ the facts were admitted, and would



“ therefore bring at once to the test the dis-  
 “ positions of the Spanish Ministers.” It was a  
 case, too, more particularly adapted to this end,  
 because the condemnation of the vessel turned  
 mainly upon an allegation, which rendered the  
 wrong inflicted a matter of direct national con-  
 cern. The grounds specified for the condemna-  
 tion of this vessel were, that it was “ found  
 “ trading with the *rebels of Buenos Ayres.*”  
 Now Buenos Ayres had long ceased to yield  
 obedience to the mother country, and every  
 vestige of Spanish authority had long disappear-  
 ed from the precincts of that Colony: moreover,  
 it had been distinctly and solemnly declared by  
 England, and admitted by Spain, that if the  
 former forbore to prejudge the question of a  
 possible amicable arrangement between Spain  
 and her ancient Colonies, by acknowledging the  
 independent separate interests of the latter, “ she  
 “ did so in the complete understanding, and on  
 “ the condition distinctly admitted by Spain,  
 “ that her trade with those Colonies should be  
 “ free and unmolested, and that Spain should  
 “ not, even on the resumption of her au-  
 “ thority (if ever she should be able to resume  
 “ it), resort to the re-establishment of her exclu-  
 “ sive system; or, if at all, at least not without  
 “ a previous warning, and an equitable allowance  
 “ of time for the winding up of British commer-  
 “ cial concerns.”

It was obvious that if such a pretension was once tolerated by the British Government, as a just cause for the confiscation of British vessels, that all her trade with Spanish America must have been put an end to at once.

Mr. Canning therefore determined that on this point England should take her stand, and demand retribution.

But this was not the only cause for complaint that this country had against Spain : innumerable piracies upon British traders had been committed in the West Indian Seas, not only under the Spanish flag (for which it might be alleged that Spain was not responsible), but by persons having their establishments on shore in the Island of Cuba, resorting thither for refuge from pursuit, and depositing there the spoils of their plundering and murderous expeditions.

On this subject (as well as on that previously mentioned) representations and remonstrances had been made to the Spanish Government, and with no better effect. "Enquiry and redress had been promised ; but, whatever was the success of the enquiries, redress there had been none : " nor did the Governor of the Havannah, when applied to on the matter, acknowledge to having received any orders from his Court, to take any measures for the extirpation of the pirates, notoriously sheltering themselves within the limits of his Government.

Mr. Canning therefore thought, that “neither  
 “the pride, nor the interests, nor, after a fair  
 “time allowed for the effect of representations,  
 “the patience of this country ought any longer  
 “to bear such outrages.” •

The King therefore was advised to issue orders to the Admiralty, to adopt the most decisive and summary measures for affording protection to His Majesty’s subjects, and to the navigation of the West Indian seas ; and as to sweep the seas would have been unavailing so long as the pirates found a sure and inviolable asylum in the ports and fastnesses of Cuba, the commander of the squadron appointed for the purpose was to be directed, “after he should have  
 “communicated with the Governor of the Havana, and learnt whether or not he was  
 “ready to co-operate in the enterprise, in  
 “the one case with, in the other without the  
 “assistance of that officer, to land wherever  
 “on that coast the haunts of the pirates were  
 “to be discovered, and to take signal vengeance  
 “for the outrages which had in so many instances  
 “been committed by them against the  
 “commerce, persons, and lives of His Majesty’s  
 “subjects.”

“That the execution of these orders would  
 “involve a violation of the Spanish territory  
 “was neither overlooked nor denied ; but the  
 “growing magnitude of the evil, and the evident

“ want on the part of the Spanish Government  
 “ either of the will or the power to suppress it,  
 “ forced the decision to be taken, from which  
 “ Great Britain, in deference to the Court of Spain,  
 “ had forborne too long, and the recurrence to  
 “ which under circumstances of such peculiar  
 “ provocation on the one hand, and such hope-  
 “ lessness of redress on the other, became a  
 “ measure no less of obligation than necessity ;  
 “ a necessity arising out of the apparent power-  
 “ lessness of Spain to provide any other cure for  
 “ the mischief ; and an obligation imposed upon  
 “ the King of Great Britain by a due regard for  
 “ the interests of his subjects, which it is the  
 “ first duty of a Sovereign to protect.”

Sir William à Court was instructed frankly  
 to acquaint the Spanish Government with the  
 determination which had been taken ; but at the  
 same time he was desired to state, that it was  
 not intended “ to imply by it any intimation of  
 “ an hostile, or even unfriendly disposition.” He  
 was further authorized to assure the Spanish Go-  
 vernment, that the King had no desire to inter-  
 fere in the internal affairs of Spain ; and that His  
 Majesty anxiously hoped that the issue of the  
 then existing struggles in that kingdom “ might  
 “ be favourable alike to its power and its happi-  
 “ ness ; to the lawful authority of the Mon-  
 “ archy, and to the just and regulated liberties  
 “ of the Nation.”

“ But in proportion as Great Britain was scrupulous in abstaining from any interference in the internal concerns of Spain, she had a right to expect that in its external regulations care would be taken to respect British rights and honour ; and that no cause of offence would be given, and no injury inflicted, upon British Subjects.”

Before sufficient time had elapsed to receive from Madrid an answer to these communications, and subsequently to the period of directing them to be made, there came to the knowledge of the British Government such multiplied instances of British Ships, trading to the Spanish Main, being captured by armed vessels under the Spanish Flag, for presuming to violate constructive blockades, which were declared of the whole coast of Spanish America, that it was thought absolutely necessary to give “ a wider range to those measures of self-redress” which have already been described.

Orders were issued to the British Commanders in those Seas, to have recourse to reprisals, wherever any British Vessels should suffer from violence or depredation.

The fact of these orders being issued was likewise openly avowed to the Spanish Government; but the communication was not made without a renewal of the assurances of the sincere and earnest desire of the King of England, to remain

on terms of friendship with His Catholick Majesty : but since the Spanish Monarch was unable to prevent such repeated acts of provocation, no alternative was left to Great Britain, but either “ to pursue her claims for redress by representation and remonstrance, and at length, “ when forbearance was exhausted, to resort to “ that last extremity, by which alone the undressed grievances of one Crown against another can be vindicated ; or to adopt the more “ mitigated but more effectual course which was “ then decided upon.”

The acts of which Great Britain complained, Sir William à Court was instructed to say to the Spanish Government, were (as this country was willing to believe) as much “ acts of disobedience to the Crown, under whose flag they “ were perpetrated, as of offence to the friendly “ power against whose flag they were directed. “ In applying, therefore, a local resistance to “ specified local aggressions, committed under cover of the Spanish Flag, which either “ escaped the superintendence, or defied the “ control of His Catholick Majesty, the King of “ England considered himself rather as exercising a vicarious jurisdiction for the King of “ Spain, than as entering into a conflict with “ His Majesty’s authority.” That in exercising his undoubted right of reprisal against those who made use of the Spanish Flag against the per-

sons and property of British Subjects, his Britannick Majesty only lent to the King of Spain the aid of his naval force to put down abuses, which, without doubt, it would have been as much the desire of the Spanish Government to repress for itself, as it unquestionably was its duty, if it had possessed the means at its disposal.

Perhaps there never was a more anxious moment in Mr. Canning's Life than when he thus ordered these vigorous remonstrances to be addressed to the Spanish Government, and such decisive steps to be taken to vindicate the national honour.

His policy, at that moment, was almost exclusively directed to the preservation, if possible, of peace between France and Spain. He was well aware that the best chance of success depended on our mediation, or our good offices, being employed for that purpose.

He was not insensible to the probability that Spain would feel the measures to be adopted both deeply and resentfully; and to enhance the difficulties of the crisis, the very period at which these measures were resolved upon was the precise time at which the Congress at Verona broke up, leaving a state of things neither to be denominated *War* nor *Peace*, but tending to *War*. It was therefore far from improbable, that an attack by France, on

the side of the Pyrenees, would coincide, in point of time, with hostile operations by Great Britain against Spain in the West Indies; a coincidence, which would have produced an appearance of concert, which might have imposed both on Europe and on the publick of England, and fastened upon the very first of Mr. Canning's official acts a character diametrically opposite to its real one.

But he clearly saw that it would be highly detrimental to the interests of Spain herself to abstain from demanding redress, on account of her political distractions; for if her internal condition afforded any motives for forbearance, and if England was to examine into it in search of such motives, other nations might, in the exercise of the same right of examination, find motives for a different course of conduct.

“England would not look upon the anarchy in Spain as an offence; but neither would she allow Spain to plead it as a privilege.” But, moreover, England had a right by Treaty\*, if redress was delayed beyond a certain time, to take that redress into her own hands.

Mr. Canning felt that the honour of this Coun-

\* The treaty which contains this provision was signed in 1667. It was incorporated in the treaty of Utrecht, which is entitled a Treaty of Navigation and Commerce. It was renewed in 1783, and subsisted in 1796, and the treaty of 1814 ratifies all commercial treaties in existence in 1796.



try was at stake, and that it was better to run all hazards of misconstruction, than tamely to submit any longer to unprovoked and continued injuries. He resolved, therefore, upon doing what was right fearlessly, and to trust to proving that it was right, should the propriety or policy of the act be called in question.

As it was, however, the frank and open manliness of our conduct entirely succeeded. All the better part of the Spanish Government and Cortes acknowledged how deeply we were aggrieved, and thought us justified in the resolutions we had taken. And being well aware how valuable our countenance and good will would be to them at such a juncture, after a little show of resistance on the part of the Ministers, they promised to apply to the Cortes to give them authority to settle all our differences, by giving satisfaction for the ships captured in the West Indies, by the withdrawal of the prohibition against trading to the Spanish Colonies, and by the immediate payment of the claims already acknowledged, and authority to settle the others, in proportion as they should be passed. Since these friendly assurances of redress were given by the Spanish Ministers in an unqualified way, England was once again placed in a condition to employ her best efforts as she might wish in favour of Spanish Independence.

While these negotiations were being carried

on, the Constitutional Generals Mina and O'Donnell, had succeeded in crushing the Army of the Faith, and compelling the self-constituted Regency of Urgel to seek refuge in France.

By the beginning of December the triumph of the Constitutional cause over its internal enemies seemed to be complete.

If the bias of M. de Villèle's mind leaned (as it undoubtedly did), even before the commencement of the Congress, towards a pacifick line of policy, the discomfiture of the Spanish Royalists, and total dispersion of their bands, was only calculated to confirm him in it. But, besides this, other circumstances conspired to strengthen his original opinion.

Before the conclusion of the Congress the apprehension, which the French Premier had entertained, probably, from a consciousness of his intrigues, that Spain would declare war against France, was dissipated. The French Government received about the beginning of November satisfactory accounts of the success of the Spanish Government in keeping within bounds the irritation that had been shown by the leading members of the extraordinary Cortes against France. The Spanish Government continued to pursue, as M. de Villèle himself acknowledged, a conciliatory system towards the French Ministers, and manifested a strong inclination to pay the

utmost attention to their complaints. The danger that for a short space of time seemed to menace the personal liberty of some members of the Royal Family was gone by. And the commercial part of the community in France, beginning to be alarmed at the prospect of a war with Spain, petitions to the Minister of the Interior from the principal trading towns were so numerous, that that Minister judged it expedient to decline receiving any further representations on the subject.

The fear, too, that England might take advantage of the disposition of the Cortes to empower the Spanish Government to conclude a commercial Treaty, granting her special privileges, was also another incentive to M. de Villèle to endeavour to preserve peace; and, lastly, the firm language held by the Duke of Wellington at Verona, and the uncertainty what such language might indicate, coupled with the Naval Armaments that were being fitted out in the English Ports for the West Indies, excited a salutary alarm in M. de Villèle's mind, as well as to whether attacking Spain might not risk a rupture with England, as also how far it would be wise to run such a risk with a nation whose Ministry seemed so resolutely bent on vindicating the national honour and avenging any insults to the British Flag or any depredations on the British Commerce.

The same candid explanations as to the destination of these armaments were given to M. de Villèle when he asked them, that had been previously given, unasked, to the Spanish Government; and, while Mr. Canning did not deny that a proposal for a Commercial Treaty, if made, might lead to practical consequences, he did not hesitate to contradict, in the most unequivocal manner, the extravagant reports that were circulated, that Spain was to purchase the interposition of England at Verona, and her assistance, if that interposition should fail, with commercial advantages and Colonial cessions.

While this uncertainty existed as to whether Spain would or would not be attacked, the Portuguese Constitutional Government was seated in too close a vicinity to that of Spain, and bore too close a resemblance to it, both in form and in the circumstances which attended its establishment, not to feel the most intense interest as to what might be the fate awaiting its neighbour.

An attempt was accordingly made, at the latter end of September, by Portugal to obtain from Great Britain a guarantee both of the integrity of the Portuguese territory, and the existence of the Portuguese Constitution; — insinuating, at the same time, if this were refused, an *offensive* and defensive Treaty would at once be negotiated with Spain.

Mr. Canning, however, disregarded the threat, and in declining to comply with the request, took the opportunity of explaining to the Portuguese Government the exact nature of the engagements subsisting between the two countries; that those engagements were purely defensive, and would not entitle Portugal to call upon Great Britain for aid in a quarrel in which Portugal herself should give the provocation. Had it been otherwise, the effect would have been to have placed the vital question of whether this country should remain at peace, or go to war, entirely in the decision of the Portuguese Government. The consequence of this explanation was the suspension, and ultimately the abandonment, of the projected alliance between Portugal and Spain.

Such was the state of the Spanish question amongst the several European Powers at the termination of the Congress at Verona.

Before, however, the history of this question is continued, it will be advisable to go back to the other matters which occupied the attention of the Congress, of which the next in importance was the state of affairs between Russia and the Porte, and between the Porte and its Greek subjects.

## CHAP. IV.

COMMENCEMENT OF GREEK INSURRECTION.—MR. CANNING'S VIEWS ON EASTERN AFFAIRS.—PROCEEDINGS AT VERONA RESPECTING,—1. THE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN RUSSIA AND TURKEY;—2. ITALY;—3. THE SLAVE TRADE;—4. SPANISH AMERICA.

It was in the beginning of the year 1821 that the Christian subjects of the Porte commenced their attempt to conquer their independence. They had for a long period been increasing in wealth and numbers, and, at this time, engrossed nearly the whole of the commerce and navigation of the Ottoman Empire. It does not appear that any unusual severities, or any very recent arbitrary enactments inflicted upon them by their Mussulman Masters, were the immediate causes of their rebellion; and although a merciless system of government (the only one which is ever followed by Turkish Rulers), must be peculiarly grievous to Christians, yet they do not seem to

have fared much worse, in these respects, than their fellow-subjects, who followed the religion of the Prophet. The undoubted fact, that the Christians throughout the Turkish Empire had in latter years increased in power, in numbers, and in riches, tells more for the general lenity of the Government under which they lived than any insulated cases of oppression, of which without doubt there were many, can avail in proof of its general system of severity, or misrule.

The very circumstance, however, of the importance into which they had risen is sufficient to account, both for their desire to recover their independence, and their hope of success if they should make the attempt.

Whether, therefore, they were induced to make an effort at this particular time to throw off the Turkish yoke, by the example of the successful resistance long maintained by one of the Sultan's vassals, Ali Pacha, against His Highness's authority, — or by the intrigues of Russian Agents, that most assuredly were carried on by them, but probably without the knowledge, certainly without the consent, of the Russian Emperor ; — or, lastly, by becoming converts to those liberal principles which had induced the people of some of the European nations to rise against their Governments, — or whether it was from all these causes united, — certain it is, that as soon as the standard of Rebellion was raised,

the whole Christian population of Greece and of the Islands, flocked around it with enthusiasm, ready to perish in the cause of Liberty.

The rebellion first manifested itself in Wallachia ; and before the Porte had time to take effectual measures for its suppression, a revolt, of a more alarming nature, broke out in Moldavia, headed by Prince Alexander Ypsilanti, son of a former Hospodar of that Principality. At first Ypsilanti seemed confident of the support and protection of Alexander, and actually applied to that Monarch for assistance. Unfortunately, however, for Ypsilanti his application reached His Imperial Majesty at the moment when he was in the act of concerting with his Allies, at Laybach, a plan for putting down the Constitutional Governments of Naples and Piedmont. To have denounced Revolution in Italy, and, at the same instant, to have countenanced it in Moldavia, would have been an inconsistency of which the Russian Autocrat was not likely to be guilty. It appears, therefore, that he publicly condemned the conduct of Ypsilanti, and positively refused him all assistance.

Meanwhile the Insurrection spread throughout the Morea, and the Islands. When the news of it reached Constantinople, the greatest atrocities were perpetrated upon the persons of the unhappy Greeks residing in that capital. The Patriarch of the Greek Church, a venerable man



of nearly eighty years of age, was seized on Easter Sunday, while in the act of celebrating Mass, and was hanged a few hours afterwards, at the door of his own house. Other Prelates, who were with him at the same time, shared the same fate. These cruelties only served to unite as one man the whole Greek population, in their determination to throw off the yoke of their oppressors ; and, whenever an opportunity offered, they retaliated on the Turks, who fell into their hands, the barbarities which had been inflicted upon their brethren at Constantinople. The Turks, in their turn, revenged themselves ; and the history of the conflict is one continued series of butcheries on both sides.

The Turks were successful in regaining their authority in the Principalities. But in Northern Greece, the Morea, and the Islands, although, till the Autumn, they kept possession of the fortified places, the Greeks completely drove them from the open Country. The Greek Fleet destroyed part of the Turkish Squadron, the remainder of which retired to the Dardanelles, leaving the Greek Navy mistress of the Archipelago.

While the European dominions of the Sultan were thus convulsed from one end to the other, the very existence of his Empire seemed threatened, by a quarrel, in which he found himself engaged with the Russian Court. The Emperor

Alexander; indeed, although he disclaimed all idea of countenancing the Greek Insurrection, yet thought proper to direct his Representative to remonstrate with the Porte upon many of its proceedings; such as the occupation of the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia by Turkish Troops, which was contrary to Treaty; the profanation and destruction of many Christian Churches; and the general outrages to which the Christian subjects of the Porte had been exposed, for whose protection the Russian Government had a right, by Treaty, to interfere.

Independently of all these general causes of complaint, the conduct of the Porte towards the Russian Ambassador, personally, was any thing but conciliatory.

A Greek banker, with whom the Russian Embassy was connected, was seized on a charge of treason; the Ambassador, Baron Strogonoff, demanded from the Porte that he should be instantly set at liberty. The Divan rejected obstinately all the Ambassador's requests, but yielded the point to the representations of the British Ambassador, Lord Strangford.

A Russian Packet Boat, contrary to the orders of the Turkish Government, entered a forbidden channel, and cast anchor before the country residence of the Russian Embassy at Bouyouk-Déré. The Turkish Admiral declared that if the packet proceeded farther it would be fired

upon. Baron Strogonoff remonstrated; but finding his remonstrances disregarded, he withdrew (June 10. 1821,) from Pera to his country house; refused to enter into any communications with the Porte, and sent home for instructions to his Government. On the 18th of July the Baron, having received his instructions, delivered in a note, to reply to which he only allowed the Porte the short space of eight days.

The conditions demanded were,

1st. "That the Greek Churches, destroyed, or plundered, should be immediately restored, and rendered fit for the celebration of Divine worship.

2d. "That the Christian Religion should be restored to its prerogatives, by granting it the same protection it formerly enjoyed, and by guaranteeing its inviolability for the future, thus to console Europe in some degree for the murder of the Patriarch.

3d. "That an equitable distinction should be made between the innocent and the guilty; and a prospect of peace held out to those Greeks, who should hereafter submit, within a given time.

And, lastly, "That the Turkish Government should enable Russia by virtue of existing Treaties to contribute to the pacification of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia."

Agreeing to these terms, was "the only means," it was stated, "by which the Turks would be able to avoid their utter ruin."

To these demands the Porte delayed returning an answer within the given time. The Ambassador demanded his passports, and it was only when he, and the whole of the Embassy, had actually embarked for Odessa, that the Reis Effendi returned an answer, which His Excellency then refused to receive, and forthwith proceeded on his voyage.

The Porte, therefore, was compelled to send its answer to the Russian Foreign Secretary of State, Count Nesselrode, at St. Petersburg.

The answer (dated 28th July) denied having any fixed design to wage war against the Christian Religion, declared that the Greek Patriarch, and the other Prelates, had only suffered the just punishment of their crimes, as they were engaged in treasonable designs; and retorted upon the Russian assertion, that "no Patriarch of the Eastern Church had ever undergone a dreadful death, upon the very spot where he was performing his sacred functions, on a day the most revered by Christians," by informing the Russian Minister that the Sublime Porte was not ignorant that "under the Czar Peter, the Russian Patriarch was not only put to death, but the Patriarchal dignity was entirely sup-

**“pressed,” for a season, by the offended Monarch.**

With regard to the Principalities, the Porte promised, as soon as they should be delivered from the brigands who disturbed their tranquillity, to withdraw its troops, and “to proceed immediately to the nomination and investiture of the Waiwodes,” on condition that Michael Suzzo, the Rebel Chief of Moldavia, and his accomplices, who had fled to Russia for protection, should, in virtue of existing Treaties, be surrendered to the Turkish authorities.

In conformity with the promises made, in this answer, the Sultan published a manifesto to the authorities in Anatolia and Roumelia, denouncing his severest displeasure against those who should commit any violence upon his defenceless Christian subjects, who had taken no part in the revolt; and a firman was addressed to the new Greek Patriarch, offering an amnesty to such of the Greeks as would return to their allegiance.

Meanwhile the conflict was carried on chiefly to the advantage of the Greeks. Tripolizza, the largest town in the Morea, when half captured by assault, was surrendered by the Turkish commander, on condition that the lives of the garrison should be spared; a condition which was immediately violated by the Greek captors.

Corinth, likewise, fell into their hands; and Napoli di Malvasia was reduced by famine. At Thermopylæ the Turks sustained a bloody defeat; and, in Acarnania, and Etolia, the Suliotes preserved their superiority over the Turks, who gained, however, towards the close of the year, some advantages in Macedonia. But notwithstanding these partial successes of the Greeks, the probability of the final triumph of their cause seemed much diminished, by the pacifick sentiments which the Russian Emperor entertained, in spite of the anger manifested at the departure of his Embassy from Constantinople. His Imperial Majesty's personal feelings, even in a question of this nature, were what were sure to guide the policy of the Russian Cabinet. Alexander professed to be his own minister, and, in point of fact, had made himself so to a degree of which the world in general had little conception. For some time past, a struggle had been going on between the two ostensible Ministers of Russia, Count Nesselrode and Count Capo d'Istrias, the one being at the head of the party, who wished to preserve peace with Turkey,—the other at the head of those who were for immediate war. For a time it had been doubtful which Minister would be triumphant; but at last, the fear of the revolutionary spirit, which had shown itself in different parts of Europe, had a greater influence over His Im-

perial Majesty's mind, than the temptations which a war with Turkey afforded to him, with the chance of that war producing a dissolution of the Alliance. Instead, therefore, of taking advantage of the opportunity to commence hostilities, he dismissed Count Capo d'Istrias, and requested the good offices of the other Christian Embassies at Constantinople, to induce the Porte to comply with his demands.

The Internuncio \* and British Ambassador were, in consequence of this request, instructed to urge concession on the Sultan, and his Ministers, who, on the 19th of October, 1821, received at Constantinople the answer from St. Petersburg, to their note of the 28th of July; which was not only a repetition of the same demands made in Baron Strogonoff's original note of the 18th of July, but required, in addition, that the Porte should take some direct step (*marche directe*) towards conciliation, by informing the Russian Court of the fact, that the Principalities were restored to the state in which, by treaty, they ought to be; and that the Navigation of the Black Sea (the regulations respecting which the Porte had, as far as regarded Russia, unwisely and unfairly altered,) should be replaced upon the same footing that it was on before the breaking out of the Greek Insurrection.

\* Internuncio — the name given to the Representative of Austria at Constantinople.

The Porte returned no answer to this note till the 10th of December, when, the Reis Effendi having been dismissed, and a new Minister appointed, a reply was sent to Lord Strangford, in which the Porte consented to adjourn the question of the surrender of its rebellious subjects, who had taken refuge in Russia; but declined to evacuate the Principalities, or to appoint Hospodars, till the rebellion of its Christian subjects, which had begun in those Provinces, should be finally crushed. Nevertheless, the Porte consented to maintain no more troops there than were necessary to keep down the brigands with which the country was over-run; and further engaged to rebuild the churches as soon as peace should be restored to the Empire.

This note was immediately sent to St. Petersburg by Lord Strangford. The compliance with the Russian demands being made to depend upon a contingency little likely to occur, at any rate for a considerable time, it was, in fact, little better than a direct refusal of those demands. Still, however, the Czar was unwilling to appeal to arms, and actually sent M. de Tatischeff to Vienna, with full powers to arrange all the differences between the two Courts; but the Porte persevered in its determination not to concede any thing beyond what it had offered to concede, in its note to Lord Strangford; and



answered the remonstrances made on behalf of Russia, by complaints against Russia for persevering in her violation of the stipulations of the Treaty of Bucharest, by still retaining possession of the fortresses on the Asiatick frontier, which by that Treaty it had been settled should be surrendered to the Porte. M. de Tatischeff returned, therefore, to Petersburg, without having succeeded in the objects of his mission.

The English Ambassador and the Internuncio were not, however, prevented from continuing their exertions with the Porte, to induce Her to yield to the just demands of Russia. Towards the middle of May their representations began to make some impression upon the obstinacy of the Divan, which at last gave orders for the evacuation of the Principalities, and appointed two Christian, native boyards, to the Government of those Provinces. It was, indeed, time for the Turks to yield something of their pretensions, pressed as they were by difficulties on all sides, and especially by a war with Persia; to say nothing of the complete destruction of Aleppo, and all the towns in its neighbourhood, by an earthquake.

The contest in Northern Greece, the Morea, and the Islands, was carried on with various success during the early part of 1822. It had, however, assumed somewhat of a different cha-

racter in consequence of the national Congress, which had been established by the Greeks at Epidaurus, having published a manifesto, claiming, on their behalf, the rank of a Free and Independent People. \*The same horrors which had disgraced the conflict in the preceding year were continued in this. But one, even still greater than any that had occurred before, took place in the beginning of April. Scio, the richest and most commercial of the islands in the Archipelago, had thus far taken no part in the Rebellion. Towards the end of March, a little squadron, belonging to the Insurgents, appeared off the Island, and having disembarked a small force of about 5000 men, the whole Christian population rose against the Turks, who, finding resistance useless, fled to the citadel for protection. The victory of the Greeks was, as usual, disgraced by outrages, and the Turks resolved on a signal vengeance. A fortnight after the Insurrection, a large Turkish force, amounting to 15,000 men, landed on the devoted island. The whole population was exterminated; every habitable dwelling was set on fire, and the country left a complete desert.

Vigorous remonstrances against these atrocities, addressed to the Porte by Lord Strangford, by direction of the English Government,

certainly produced a very strong impression on the Turkish Ministers.

The Greeks shortly after revenged themselves upon the chief actors in these scenes of desolation. They succeeded in fastening two fire-ships to two of the largest ships of the Turkish navy lying at anchor off Scio; one of which (the Admiral's) was burnt, and every soul on board, to the number of 2300, perished. The other ship was considerably injured, but the crew managed to extinguish the flames. The Turks in the remaining vessels forthwith again landed, and destroyed every vestige of every thing Christian in the island, which had before escaped the general destruction.

While these dreadful occurrences were taking place in the Archipelago, which could tend but little towards bringing the contest to a termination, the Turks were gaining very considerable advantages in Northern Greece and in the Morea. They succeeded in introducing a large army, under the command of the Seraskier, Curshid Pacha, into the former country, through the passes of Thermopylæ, which the Greeks had neglected to defend; a part of which force, having marched into the Morea, was joined by a body of men under Yusuf Pacha, who then assumed the command: Corinth and Argos fell into his hands, and a large reinforcement was

thrown into Napoli di Romania, the Turkish garrison of which important place was just on the eve of capitulation.

This was the state of affairs between the Porte and its rebellious subjects, as known in England, immediately subsequent to the Duke of Wellington's departure for the Congress at Vienna, where the condition of the East of Europe (as it was then supposed) was to have been the chief subject of deliberation.

With respect to the negotiations between Russia and the Porte, the demands of the former, founded on Treaties, (with the exception of the one relating to the Black Sea, of which the British Government had not then heard,) with one exception, were either actually satisfied, or in the course of being so. . The new Hospodars had departed from Constantinople for their Governments; the Turkish troops were gradually evacuating the Principalities; and the Greek Churches, which had been destroyed or injured, were being rebuilt or repaired. There remained only for the Divan to renew the amnesty to the Greeks, the publication of which instrument, on the part of the Turkish Government, "would have completed all that the letter " or spirit of existing treaties would have entitled Russia to require from the Porte, or " the Allies of Russia to countenance her in " exacting."

There consequently would have remained little more to be done, beyond reducing to diplomatick form the reconciliation between the Russian and the Ottoman Governments, if the Emperor of Russia had not seemed to feel himself bound to obtain some more signal manifestation of the success, wherewith he had pursued the objects for which he menaced hostilities, and of the deference with which he had been treated by the Turkish Court.

It was only with this view that the attempt to obtain the mission of a Turkish Plenipotentiary to the frontiers, after almost all the points of the dispute had been adjusted, could have been pressed; so earnestly as it had been, by the Russian Emperor. It appeared, however, by the accounts from Lord Strangford, that the attempt had failed; and it could hardly be expected to be renewed with advantage, unless the Russian Government should be disposed to admit the bringing into discussion, under the mediation of the Allies, his Imperial Majesty's disputes with Turkey, on the frontiers of their respective Asiatick dominions; an admission which, as the Emperor was the violator of Treaties in that direction, was altogether improbable.

Failing, therefore, in this attempt, nothing seemed to remain which could be required by the Emperor with any reason, or with any probability of its being conceded by the Turks,

except the addition to the proposed act of amnesty for the Greeks, of some solemn and recorded obligation on the part of the Turkish Court, for the future good government of its Greek subjects. "Such an addition would have been, without doubt, highly desirable; and it was only natural that the Emperor of Russia should have been desirous to obtain it. But as such a demand was not within the limits of his ultimatum, nor in the letter of his Treaties, the question with the British Government was, whether His Imperial Majesty should be allowed to seek it in his own way, or through his own means, at the risk of a refusal leading to a renewal of angry discussions, and possibly to war; or whether the Allies should join with him in a common demand, at the risk of compromising their dignity, if the Turks should refuse to yield, and the Allies should acquiesce in the refusal; or, by asserting their dignity, of being drawn into a joint war."

Before being driven to such an alternative, the British Government was determined to make every amicable effort with the Porte to induce it, for its own sake, to yield to the demands of Russia. But if its efforts should be exhausted, and exhausted in vain, then the British Government would have to come to a decision upon the alternative in question. "In deciding upon it

“ their object would continue to be, as it had  
 “ hitherto been, to maintain peace among na-  
 “ tions, and to avoid all interference in the in-  
 “ ternal concerns of any nations — such inter-  
 “ ference not being authorized by the positive  
 “ rights or obligations of Treaty, nor justified  
 “ (except when Treaty or some very special cir-  
 “ cumstance authorized it) by the principles of  
 “ international law.”

“ ‘The questions respecting Turkey presented  
 “ themselves under a double aspect. So far as  
 “ related to the struggle between the Greeks  
 “ and the Porte, Great Britain had no right to  
 “ interfere. Whatever might be her wishes, her  
 “ prejudices, or her sympathies, she was bound  
 “ in political justice to respect, in this case, that  
 “ national independence, which in case of civil  
 “ commotion She would look to have respected  
 “ in her own. Nor was it for a Christian Go-  
 “ vernment, which ruled in its distant depend-  
 “ encies over a population of millions of Ma-  
 “ hometans, to proclaim a war of Religion.”

The discussions between Russia and Turkey,  
 on the other hand, prescribed a case which called  
 for English mediation. It was impossible for  
 England to view the hazard to which Europe  
 was exposed by the collision of two such Powers,  
 without feeling herself bound to interfere, with  
 the utmost exertion of her good offices, to pre-  
 vent so formidable a contingency.

Accordingly she, in concert with her Allies, had so interposed, and not without effect.

“ The quarrel of the Emperor of Russia was founded on the non-observance of Treaties, which gave the Emperor a right of interference, to a certain extent, in the internal affairs of the Turkish Government; and through British influence the infractions of Treaty had been redressed. But the right which Treaties might give, Treaties must be held to limit. And if the Emperor determined upon pushing his demands beyond that limitation, neither was it the policy of England, nor was it consistent with her principles, to make common cause with His Imperial Majesty.”

“ The Emperor might have motives of policy, exclusively Russian, if not for regretting the loss of an opportunity to aggrandize himself at the expense of Turkey, at least for not appearing to have thrown such an opportunity away, so hastily, as to embitter the regrets, and possibly excite the indignation, of his army and his people. In such a temper of mind the advisers of the Emperor of Russia might wish that the terms of reconciliation exacted from Turkey had been originally higher, might feel disappointment at the concession of them by Turkey, and might seek to amend their error by new and unattainable requisitions.”



In such requisitions Mr. Canning determined that England should never join ; nor should she make herself a party to any new calls upon Turkey which Russia had no right to enforce. “ If, therefore, the Emperor of Russia should resolve upon urging such demands to the extremity of war, England would withdraw altogether from any concern in the contest.”

If this reasoning were applicable to the then existing relations between Turkey and Russia, it was still more applicable to the discussions between the Porte and its Greek subjects.

“ In those discussions England had not the pretence of a right to interfere. It was certainly her right, her duty, and her inclination to employ her utmost endeavours to induce the Porte, with a view to its own interests, not only to grant the fullest amnesty to, but really and in good truth to govern, its Christian subjects with a mild and equitable sway. But as to further interference, what if the Greeks, who had but lately published an Act declaratory of their independence, should determine to accept nothing short of its acknowledgment? And what if they should reject all terms short of that acknowledgment as insult and injury? And what if the Turkish Government were to put to England the question (as it would have a right to do), ‘ Whether, if the Sultan should agree to grant

“ ‘ all that England required, and if the effect  
 “ ‘ of the offer of such a concession should be  
 “ ‘ to raise the demands and exasperate the re-  
 “ ‘ sistance of the Greeks, would England make  
 “ ‘ common cause with the Turks, and chastise  
 “ ‘ those who rejected at once their authority  
 “ ‘ and mediation?’ Would the English Govern-  
 “ ment be prepared to answer such a question in  
 “ the affirmative? It certainly would not; and,  
 “ even if it had wished, it would not be for the  
 “ interest of the Greeks that England should  
 “ interfere in the quarrel on such a condition.”

It was for these reasons, therefore, that, while Mr. Canning determined to spare no exertion, by good offices, to preserve peace between Russia and the Porte, and to restore internal tranquillity to Turkey, yet he was equally determined, on no consideration, to incur the risk of hostilities, on either of these accounts, if those exertions should fail. To this effect the Duke of Wellington received instructions for his guidance at the Congress.

Lord Strangford having, as has been stated, been most active in carrying on the negotiations at Constantinople, His Lordship was permitted to be present at Vienna at the time of the Congress. Previously to his departure from the former capital, he had a conference (27th September 1822) with the Turkish Ministers, in which he urged upon them the renewal of the Amnesty,

and the establishment of a system of mercy and conciliation towards the Greeks, to be adopted more or less in concert with the Allies, and subject to their intervention in support of its conditions.

The Turkish Minister declared, in answer, that in point of fact it was already renewed; that every Tartar despatched from Constantinople carried to the Pachas in the Morea instructions to treat the Greeks with mercy and humanity; but that the Porte would not admit, for one moment, the proposal of rendering the Allies in any way parties to the Amnesty, or of placing its execution under their safeguard.

In urging, however, this point upon the Turkish Ministers, Lord Strangford was continually obliged to turn aside to defend the agents of the Russian Government against imputations of having been the originators of the Greek Rebellion, the proof of which it seemed the Porte held most unquestionably in its hands. Lord Strangford, in answer, attributed that insurrection to the ill treatment of the Greeks by their local rulers, and the violation of their rights, as established by the Turkish laws; and in so doing, there can be no doubt that His Lordship was so far right, that both he and the Turkish Minister assigned the origin of the rebellion to one of the causes, to which it was to be justly attributed.

In all the charges, however, of this nature the Turkish Ministers scrupulously spared the character of the Emperor, and imputed all that had been done to his Ministers, whom they accused of deceiving and misleading their Imperial Master. The conference was concluded by the Reis Effendi declaring, in the most positive manner, that the Sultan would never tolerate foreign interference in his domestick concerns; that every degree of indulgence and forgiveness would be granted to the Greek people; and that Lord Strangford was not only authorized, but requested, to make this assurance in the most positive terms to the Allied Ministers at Vienna; and, at the same time, to report the kindness shown to the Rayahs\* at Constantinople, as was proved by the execution, within three months, of 500 Turks for oppressing and insulting them, besides the banishment of thousands for no other offence.

Of this conference, Lord Strangford made a Précis, which he communicated to Prince Metternich:

As soon as this Précis became known at Vienna, where the Allied Sovereigns were assembled, the Emperor Alexander took offence at the part which Lord Strangford had acted, in not having struggled to preserve the dignity of

\* Rayah—any subject of the Porte, not a Mahometan.

Russia, by denying the charges brought against its agents by the Ministers of the Porte. The Emperor, indeed, would not believe a word of the Précis of Lord Strangford's conference, and looked upon it as a romance, written to set His Imperial Majesty against his servants. But the truth was, Lord Strangford could not have repelled the charges against the Russian Government more effectually than he did. The Porte, he well knew, had received the most positive proofs of the activity of Russian Agents in the insurrection of the Morea; and so anxious was the Porte to force these proofs upon him, that he was obliged, while he attributed the revolt to other causes, carefully to abstain from expressing even his doubts as to the existence of Russian intrigues, lest the Reis Effendi should have produced such proofs of their existence, as would have left him no choice but that of acknowledging them.

The circumstance, too, that the Russian Agent had suppressed the declaration of the Emperor's displeasure, at the first breaking out of the Insurrection in Moldavia, made it impossible for Lord Strangford to use this the strongest argument, in proof of the *bonâ fide* dispositions of Russia. But the truth, as before stated, was, that a difference of opinion, on the subject of Oriental Politicks, had existed between the Autocrat, and some of his Ministers; a circumstance

which explains the apparently inconsistent conduct pursued by the Russian Government.

Count Nesselrode, however, took advantage of the occasion to circulate a note among the Plenipotentiaries of the different Courts, animadverting on the conduct of Lord Strangford, whereby the double purpose was answered, first, of appearing to be highly indignant at the insinuations against the good faith of the Russian Government; and next, of laying the grounds for breaking off with the Turks, in case the Emperor should change his mind, and think it politic to do so.

The Duke of Wellington defended Lord Strangford's conduct to the Emperor Alexander, and made so considerable an impression upon His Imperial Majesty, that, before the conclusion of the interview, he declared that he did not mean to censure Lord Strangford, and promised that he would receive him perfectly well; which promise he kept.

The Duke, however, before the Congress adjourned from Vienna to Verona, addressed a note to Count Nesselrode upon the subject, in justification of Lord Strangford.

The questions that were still at issue between Turkey and Russia His Grace did not touch upon, but left them for discussion at the latter place. The Porte having complied with all the demands in the original Russian Ultimatum, and

the pretension of being allowed to watch over the execution of the amnesty to the Greeks being no longer insisted upon by the Russian Court, there remained (assuming that the Porte fairly executed the measures respecting the Principalities, which had been commenced,) only two points to be conceded; on the concession of which, all pretence for the non-establishment of a complete reconciliation between the two Powers would be done away.

Of these, the first was, that the Sultan should send a Plenipotentiary to the Frontiers, or should make some direct conciliatory overture to Russia.

The second, which had sprung up subsequently to the presentation of the original Ultimatum, was to place the system by which the Porte regulated the navigation of the Black Sea upon its ancient footing.

With regard to the first, as the Porte had already peremptorily rejected the proposal of sending a Plenipotentiary to the Frontier, and as the alternative offered was only a reasonable step for the Porte to take, and not at all derogatory to its dignity, there were fair grounds for hoping that the Sultan would not hesitate long upon the subject.

With regard to the second, it appeared that the nations which had not by treaty acquired the privilege of navigating the Black Sea, had long

enjoyed it by adopting the flag of those Powers to whom the right had been granted. This system had given rise to the abuse of foreign flags, and had even favoured the passage, to and fro, of Greek Insurgent vessels.

The Divan resolved, therefore, to put a stop to it, and accordingly issued an order, enjoining a strict search of every European vessel which should pass, under whatever flag, and a rigorous detention of all that should belong to Nations not possessing the privilege, a privilege granted to those Nations who enjoyed it, either in consequence of a war, at the end of which the Porte yielded it, or else, in consequence of some amicable negotiation, stipulating the equivalent to be given for it, by the other contracting party. The Porte, therefore, determined that it would not suffer other Powers, who had not obtained the privilege, to defraud the interests of Turkey by surreptitiously availing themselves of an advantage for which other States had been content to pay.

The effect, however, of this order was to injure, if not to destroy, the commerce of Odessa, and of the Russian territories on the Black Sea, which was carried on either in Greek vessels, or in foreign vessels under Russian colours. The Porte, however, had an undoubted right to issue the order in question; but it must, nevertheless, be allowed that it would



be somewhat painful for a Power like Russia, quietly to see the prosperity of its most important provinces, which had grown up under the acquiescence of its weaker neighbour, suddenly destroyed by the enforcement of a right which had long been practically waived.

The demand, therefore, of Russia was either that the Porte should grant to the Kings of Sardinia, Denmark, Spain, and Naples, permission for vessels, under their flag, to pass, they paying for the same; or ~~else~~, that it should continue to connive at the protections existing previously to the late regulations.

Neither the demand for some direct conciliatory overture from the Porte, nor this last-mentioned one, respecting the navigation of the Black Sea, were, it was understood, to be urged by Russia to the extremity of war. The boon, the granting of which was contingent upon the concession of these demands, was simply the re-establishment of the Russian Mission at Constantinople.

Such was the state of Eastern affairs at the time when the first conference was held respecting them at Verona.

At that conference not much was done. M. de Tatischeff read a paper, explaining the exact position of Russia towards the Porte, and stating explicitly the Russian demands, the nature of which have just been described. Prince Met-

ternich read a paper, declarative of the readiness of his Government to assist Russia in urging her demands on Turkey; and the French and Prussian Ministers declared, verbally, the determination of their respective Governments to adopt the same line as Austria. The Duke of Wellington simply made known his intention, to give in his answer to the Russian Note, at a future Meeting. The Duke, at that time, owing to a misconception of Lord Strangford's, of which it is unnecessary to detail the particulars, had received instructions not to promise the co-operation of the British Ambassador at Constantinople, towards procuring from the Porte the concessions sought respecting the navigation of the Black Sea. As the Duke was aware of the mistake into which Lord Strangford had led Mr. Canning, His Grace did not hesitate to comply with Count Nesselrode's request, not to give in his note, until he should know whether his Government would consent to give its good offices, in concert with the other Allies, to prevail upon the Porte to grant firmans for the navigation of the Black Sea, to those Powers, who, not being permitted to appear in that sea, should apply for them.

Before the second conference was held, the Duke received permission (if he should think it expedient) to direct Lord Strangford to exert

himself at Constantinople in furtherance of the Russian demands; and this was granted, because it was no longer a question in which, if the demands were not complied with, hostilities were threatened as the alternative (an alternative which could only have been defended by a denial of justice); but was reduced to the infinitely less important point of the renewal of Diplomatick Relations.

At that conference the French plenipotentiary gave in a Note, in which he declared, that France would neglect no means to induce Turkey to satisfy, as soon as possible, the demands of Russia; and the Prussian Minister pledged his country to a similar course of conduct.

The Duke of Wellington's Note promised, on behalf of his Government, that the British Ambassador should use his influence with the Divan, to persuade it to send a friendly notification to the Court of St. Petersburg of the evacuation of the Principalities; and to procure the same privileges for the other Sovereigns, respecting the Navigation of the Black Sea, which England, France, and Russia already enjoyed; and to obtain which for the King of Sardinia, Lord Strangford had been exerting himself previously to his departure from Constantinople.

To these Notes Count Nesselrode replied,

that the Emperor felt the greatest satisfaction at the conduct of the Allies, and left himself with perfect confidence in their hands.

Lord Strangford was accordingly instructed, by the Duke of Wellington, to exert himself to induce the Porte to take a step in advance towards Russia, and to push, as fast as possible, to a conclusion the Treaty between Turkey and Sardinia. As soon as he should report that his efforts had been attended with a favourable result, it would then be determined, in behalf of which of the King's Allies, similar exertions should be renewed.

The determination of the British Government to allow Lord Strangford again to undertake the task of advocating the cause of Russia with the Porte, restored His Lordship to favour both with the Emperor, and his Ministers. His Imperial Majesty honoured Lord Strangford with an audience of leave before his departure for Constantinople, and expressed his gratitude for Lord Strangford's past services, and entire confidence in his future conduct. His Imperial Majesty said, that he had intended to confide his interests to an individual in the service of the Emperor of Austria, jointly with his Lordship; but that he had since resolved to leave the final arrangements of his differences with the Porte exclusively in Lord Strangford's hands. He hoped, he said, that Lord Strangford had

dismissed from his mind every unpleasant feeling excited by allusions made in the Russian Note of the 20th September, respecting him. Lord Strangford took the opportunity of urging the Emperor to mark his restoration to the confidence of His Imperial Majesty, as his loss of it had been, by a letter, which might prove to the Turkish Ministry that he was charged with the Emperor's affairs at Constantinople; and which would be the means of removing any unfavourable impression caused by the circumstances attendant on his first reception by the Russian Ministers, of which the Porte was doubtless apprised. To this proposal the Emperor graciously consented, remarking, that he considered Lord Strangford as one of his own Ministers.

Some further conversation passed at the interview on the subject of the Greeks. The Emperor's feelings were evidently divided, between anxiety for the principles of legitimacy, and sympathy for the sufferings of his co-religionists; but the former feeling evidently prevailed over the latter, since he considered himself so committed to those principles, that he was precluded from avowing any wish, even for the success of the Greek cause. The Emperor said, that he felt convinced that public opinion in England would, in time, compel the British Ministry to take the state of Greece into their consideration;

and that that question would become, like the Slave Trade, one of strong national feeling; that he, therefore, preferred waiting for any measures which the British Government might originate, to taking the lead in proposing to the Allies any plan for improving the political state of Greece; that the idea of Greek independence was a chimera, and that the utmost extent of his wishes would be, to see the Greeks placed on the same footing as the inhabitants of Servia, or of Wallachia and Moldavia.

It is impossible not to be struck with the extreme moderation manifested by the Emperor Alexander, throughout the whole of his conduct on the subject of Eastern affairs. There can be no doubt that the great majority of his subjects, of his army, and even of his ministers, were anxious to undertake the conquest of Turkey, and to revel in the plunder of Constantinople. It was the general conviction that if he chose, and if England did not interfere with a fleet in the Black Sea to prevent him, the Emperor had it in his power to obtain possession of the Turkish capital in a single campaign: such, at least, was the opinion of many (if not all) of the first military characters of the age; and there is every reason to believe that the Emperor did not think differently himself; and yet, although he had, at one time, just grounds for declaring war against the Porte, and no

Power could have gainsaid his right to do so, he forbore to avail himself of circumstances apparently so favourable for the annihilation of the Moslem power in Europe, and preferred obtaining his just rights by means of negotiation, and the intervention of his Allies, to seeking retribution by an appeal to arms.

For this moderation on the part of the Emperor it is not difficult to account. He was well aware that in the operation against Constantinople he would lose a great portion of his army; that the war would be one of peculiar hardship and difficulty, rather than of manœuvre and gallantry; and that many would fall victims to the climate: that, even supposing the conquest to be complete, he would necessarily for some time be wholly occupied with the affairs of Asia, and the Asiatick frontier; and that he would consequently be unable to devote himself exclusively to the concerns of Europe. He knew that the employment of the Russian army in such an enterprise would give courage to the advocates of popular principles throughout the world; and as he himself perhaps did not feel his autocracy proof against their influence, he preferred keeping secure what he then enjoyed, to risking its safety for the doubtful chance of being permitted to annex to his already overgrown dominions, the European provinces of the Turkish Empire.

There can be no doubt, therefore, that the Emperor, in confiding his cause to Lord Strangford, did so, with a sincere wish that it should be advocated in a way which would enable him to settle his differences with the Sultan with credit to himself, both in the eyes of his own people, and in those of his Allies.

The note promised by the Emperor, declaratory of Lord Strangford's being again received into his confidence, was to have been written to His Lordship by Count Nesselrode; but Lord Strangford proposed, in order that the Count might be spared the mortification of addressing to him personally a letter, of a nature so very different to that which had been circulated before his arrival at Vienna, that the laudatory epistle should be addressed to Prince Metternich, for the purpose of being communicated by His Austrian Highness.

This *amende* having been made to Lord Strangford, he departed from Verona in the beginning of December.

Such were the results of the Congress respecting the relations between Turkey and Russia. No proposition was made at it by any party, to interfere in the contest between the Turks and Greeks; and even a Plenipotentiary from the latter, charged by the Provisional Government with a message to the Congress,



was not permitted to proceed to the place where it was assembled.

Meanwhile, however, the Greeks had been gaining considerable advantages over their opponents ; that part of the Turkish army which had penetrated into the Morea had been surrounded, and cut off from all supplies. The Commander of it offered to evacuate the Peninsula by capitulation ; but the offer was rejected by the triumphant Greeks. He was, therefore, compelled to endeavour to force his way to the Isthmus ; but his army was completely destroyed in the attempt, and of the 30,000 men that had entered the Morea in the beginning of the campaign, towards the close of September not above 10,000 remained.

Curschid Pacha, who had not entered the Morea, in vain attempted to come to their relief. Having failed, he tried to retreat towards Macedonia ; but his efforts to pass Thermopylæ were unsuccessful, and he was, therefore, compelled to fall back upon Larissa. Towards the end of the year the Greeks got possession of Napoli di Romania.

An attempt was made by the Turkish Fleet to retake Missolounghi, which failed ; and the Greeks attacked with fire-ships, in a way similar to that which they adopted near Scio, and with similar success, this portion of the Ottoman Navy.

The Turks were not more fortunate in their Asiatick war; for in the beginning of August they were completely defeated by the Persians, under the command of the Prince Royal.

The Ministers of the Sultan were, as usual, made responsible for the national disasters, and the major part of those who had composed the Turkish Cabinet, at Lord Strangford's departure from Constantinople, were either beheaded or dismissed, before he returned to that Capital to renew the negotiations for which he had received instructions at Verona.

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The three remaining topicks which occupied the attention of the Congress, were the position of the Italian Peninsula, the Slave Trade, and the existing state of Spanish America.

With respect to the first, though the British Plenipotentiary was directed not to interfere on the subject so long as no measures were proposed to be adopted at the Congress, which would affect either the obligations of Treaty, or the rights of independent Powers, or the political balance and general tranquillity of Europe, yet he was instructed to promote any plan for the withdrawal of the Austrian Troops both from Piedmont and Naples, by not withholding the expression of the satisfaction which his Government would derive, from such steps being resolved upon at the Congress. It was thought

that such an opinion might be given without prejudice to that "character of neutrality, but "not of indifference," which, with respect to the affairs of Italy, it was the wish of Great Britain to maintain. Before the Duke of Wellington left Verona, it was determined that some of the Austrian Troops should forthwith quit Piedmont, and that the remainder should all be withdrawn before the end of nine months. It was likewise settled that the Austrian forces in Naples should be diminished about one half.

As to the second, the Slave Trade, no step was taken by the Congress, although the opportunity was not lost by Mr. Canning to urge the different Powers assembled there to take more effectual measures for its suppression.

With regard to the last, Spanish America, a Note was circulated by the Duke of Wellington on the subject, the purport of which (as it was followed by no results) will be better explained hereafter, when the history of the circumstances attending the appointment of British Consuls to Spanish America is related, and a review taken of the objects which Mr. Canning sought to attain by the line of policy which he pursued towards those important Colonies.

## CHAP. V.

NEGOTIATIONS AT PARIS ON THE SUBJECT OF THE INVASION OF SPAIN. — LORD FITZROY SOMERSET'S MISSION TO MADRID. — FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS AT PARIS. — SPEECH OF THE KING OF FRANCE TO THE LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS. — NEGOTIATIONS ON THE SAME SUBJECT AT MADRID. — PROCEEDINGS IN THE FRENCH CHAMBERS. — MR. CANNING'S LAST EFFORT AT PARIS TO PREVENT WAR COUNTERACTED BY FURTHER DEBATES IN FRENCH CHAMBERS. — CHATEAUBRIAND'S SPEECH. — PROCEEDINGS AT MADRID. — DEPARTURE OF FERDINAND FROM THAT CAPITAL. — COMMENCEMENT OF WAR.

**THE** Duke of Wellington left Verona for Paris on the 29th of November, to renew at the latter place the remonstrances that he had made ineffectually at the former.

The Viscount de Montmorency set out three days before him for the same destination, leaving behind him M. de Chateaubriand (his colleague in the negotiations), and carrying with

him the despatches of the three Allied Courts to their Ministers at Madrid, together with the one which he had himself prepared, for the approbation of his own Government, on which despatch the others had been modelled. M. de Montmorency was well received by his Government, and had a Dukedom conferred on him as the reward of his services.

On the Duke of Wellington's arrival at Paris, he found M. de Villèle in the same pacifick temper of mind which has already been described; M. de Montmorency not having succeeded in converting his chief to his own warlike opinions during the three days that he had had the start of the Duke. So little impression, indeed, had he been able to make on M. de Villèle, that that Minister did not hesitate to inform the Duke, in their first interview, that he had sent back the despatches from the three Allied Courts to their Ministers at Madrid to Verona (which place the Allied Sovereigns could not then have quitted), with entreaties for a re-consideration of their contents; and with representations of the impropriety of sending them, when their transmission would infallibly be followed by the departure from Madrid of the several Ministers to whom they were addressed, at a moment when their presence was peculiarly desirable to watch over the safety of the Spanish Royal Family. M. de Villèle, moreover, assured the Allied Monarchs,

both that the King of Spain's desire for the invasion of his country was diminished, and that the defeat and expulsion of the Royalists from Spain had lessened the chances of a successful attack.

Whatever were the motives which actuated the President of the French Council in taking this decidedly retrograde step, there can be no doubt that, at this time, he was willing to give up any fears of danger to France from the vicinity of the Spanish Revolution, for the sake of remedying the inconveniences which Spain might experience from the separation of her American Colonies; and that he was ready, instead of marching an army to Madrid, for the purpose of restoring Ferdinand to his liberty, to convey a Spanish army to Vera Cruz, to seat a Spanish Infant on the throne of Mexico.

Notwithstanding that Mr. Canning was not unaware that these were the dispositions of the head of the French Government, he still thought that any such attempts on the part of France would be far less dangerous in their probable consequences than a hostile aggression on Spain. He, therefore, determined to leave no effort unexhausted to prevent the dreaded collision; and, for this purpose, instructions awaited the Duke of Wellington on his arrival at Paris, to offer to M. de Villèle the mediation of His Britannick Majesty between the Most Christian and Most Catholick Monarchs.

Previously to its being determined to make this offer, a communication had been made to Mr. Canning from the Spanish Foreign Secretary at Madrid, which, if it did not distinctly ask for the mediation of Great Britain, yet afforded strong hopes for believing that, if France consented to make use of our proffered assistance, Spain would not be unwilling to employ it. And further, the discussions, at Verona, having ended without any corporate hostile declaration of the Allies against Spain, the question of war was reduced to a question between France and Spain respectively ; and, consequently, as a matter of negotiation, was infinitely less complicated, and more easy to manage than if there had been several parties concerned, with as many separate interests, all pulling different ways, to whom, if the tender of mediation had been made and accepted, the party making it must have been responsible for its conduct and issue.

The fact of the despatches having been sent back to Verona was not known in London at the time these directions were given. The Duke of Wellington, therefore, suspended their execution till he had referred home for further instructions. Mr. Canning, however, confirmed those which he had originally given, thinking that it was very material for the clear and perfect discharge of the duty of the British Government, in an affair so deeply affecting the interests, not

only of the Powers immediately concerned, but of the world, that the Duke should not leave Paris without having placed in the hands of the French Government the offer of His Majesty's mediation, in the event of the answer from Verona not being such as to preclude all danger of hostilities.

The Duke of Wellington accordingly signified the King's willingness to undertake the office of Mediator in a note to M. de Montmorency, dated the 17th of December, and on the 19th quitted Paris. To this note M. de Montmorency replied on the 26th; but the reply was not given till it had been ascertained that the Allied Sovereigns would consent, only to so much delay as would not exceed the period at which the Spanish Government, on receiving the despatches, might believe that they were written at Verona, and were the result of the conferences in that town.

This determination of the Allies not to put off, beyond a certain period, the transmission of their despatches, did not diminish M. de Villèle's eagerness to enter into terms with the Spanish Government for the execution of the projects which he had conceived; and he therefore resolved on pursuing a less offensive course than the other Continental Powers, apparently that he might thereby ingratiate himself with the leading persons at Madrid. On the other hand, his



colleague, M. de Montmorency, was equally resolute in endeavouring to bring about an attack upon the Spanish Constitution. Both ministers, however, agreed in declining the tender of mediation made by the British Government. The one, because its acceptance would increase British influence at Madrid ; the other, because it would diminish the chances of hostility.

M. de Montmorency, therefore, was permitted to draw up the answer to the Duke of Wellington. He began it by saying, that the King of France fully appreciated the sentiments which induced the King of England to make the offer, but that the " nature of the situation of France " with regard to Spain did not allow of mediation, as there existed no difference between them, no specifick point of discussion, by the arrangement of which their relations might be placed on the footing on which they ought to stand." He afterwards expressed " the pleasure with which the French Government viewed the conciliatory dispositions of the British Government, which were manifested by its conduct ;" and further remarked, that it was not " between France and Spain alone " that the existing differences needed to be arranged," for that the question regarding the state of Spain was " wholly European."

Two days before (Dec. 24th, 1822,) this answer was given by M. de Montmorency, the

despatches of the three allied Courts of Russia, Austria, and Prussia to their respective Ministers at Madrid were sent off from Paris. They all denounced the existing order of things in Spain, and were full of the doctrines of legitimacy clothed in the usual plausible phraseology of continental diplomacy.

They were accompanied with orders that if, at the end of three days, either no answer should be returned to them, or no promise should be made by the Spanish Government to alter their established Constitution, the Ministers were to demand their passports, and to quit the capital.

M. de Montmorency, it appears, in consequence of his considering the question as "wholly European," had undertaken at Verona that similar instructions should be sent to the French Minister, M. de la Garde, with the French despatch. But M. de Villèle was bent on proceeding in a more mitigated manner; and though he cannot be given the credit of having placed France in the position in which she then was, from any pre-concerted plan of operations, inasmuch as it was evidently the result of chance, yet he had too much penetration not to see that the opportunity which the state of things then presented might be turned easily to account in furthering French interests, which were always uppermost in his mind. Spain, exhausted by the insurrections and anarchy which the French

Government had encouraged, had no hope of safety if hostilities were pressed against her, but in abandoning herself to the guidance of Great Britain. The three great Continental Powers persisted in pursuing measures (originally instigated by France) which he felt certain would infallibly lead to the interruption of all intercourse between them and Spain, by the withdrawal of their missions. The French Minister would then be left there alone, and after their departure, would have a more open field for his future operations ; and while the fact of France having taken a milder tone than her allies would recommend her to the Constitutional authorities at Madrid, her influence might then be established there to the exclusion of that of Great Britain ; and provided that she offered her fleets and treasure to assist in re-conquering the Spanish Colonies for the Mother Country, she might obtain some exclusive commercial advantages, or, perhaps, even some colonial cession.

These were the ideas which evidently occupied M. de Villèle's mind, when he refused to comply with M. de Montmorency's wishes to treat the question with Spain as "wholly European," and insisted on its being treated as "wholly French" and by consequence that France should pursue a very different line from that pursued by the other Continental Powers. In this dispute between the two Ministers, the

majority of the Cabinet espoused M. de Villèle's cause ; and voted that Foreign Powers had had greater influence over M. de Montmorency than was compatible with the dignity of France. The French King sided with M. de Villèle and his party, and it was, therefore, determined to write a moderate despatch, and to direct the French Minister not to quit Madrid, although the Ministers of the other three Courts should do so.

A despatch, accordingly, was sent to M. de la Garde, signed by M. de Villèle, which was couched certainly in hostile language, if considered separately, but which, if compared with the others, must have borne to the Spanish Ministers more the appearance of conciliation than of menace ; especially when they found that it was not to be followed up, as the other despatches were to be, with a demand for passports, in the case of non-compliance with the suggestions made in them ; and when it contained the assurance, " that the succours of every kind which France could dispose of in favour of Spain would always be offered to Her for the purpose of assuring Her happiness, and increasing Her prosperity."

M. de Montmorency, finding himself thus unable to carry into effect the system of policy which he had engaged, at the Congress at Verona, to support in the Cabinet at Paris, in order

to testify the sincerity of his engagement, at once, resigned.

This victory of M. de Villèle's, was, however, only a partial one.

It was not, as was at first supposed, the victory of the arguments for peace over those for war, for although gained by the Peace party, it was not gained by them upon the merits of that disputed point, but merely upon the merits of a collateral question in which the pride of Frenchmen was concerned.

The resignation of M. de Montmorency created such an alarm amongst the members of the War party, that M. de Villèle found it advisable to endeavour to appease their discontent, by the very unusual step of publishing in the *Moniteur* the despatch to M. de la Garde, only three days after it had been sent from Paris, to prove that the Ministers had not abandoned their hostile intentions. So strong, indeed, was the War party in the Cabinet, and so numerous was it in the Chambers, that M. de Villèle did not venture to insist upon replacing M. de Montmorency by any opponent of the war; and was content, therefore, to admit into the Cabinet, as his successor, an advocate of the War, the Viscomte de Chateaubriand, who, while M. de Villèle was maintaining that the question between France and Spain was "wholly French," and M. de Montmorency, that it

was "wholly European," had qualified himself for joining that party, whichever of the two should come off triumphant, by adopting the somewhat contradictory definition of its being, at once, "both wholly French and wholly "European."

M. de Chateaubriand, thus united with the Ministry, breathed nothing but war; and the very first conference that he held with the British Ambassador at Paris was spent in endeavouring to prove, as well that his sentiments agreed almost entirely with those of M. de Montmorency, as that war was essential to the interests of France; since it was impossible that the angry diplomatick communications from Spain, the language of the press, and the provocations that were heaped upon the troops on the frontier, could continue long without bringing on a rupture; while, on the other hand, it was impossible to withdraw the Army of Observation, the exciting cause of these grievances, without producing a most unfavourable impression upon the troops: moreover, he thought it better to concede something to the Royalist Party, because their division would be more prejudicial to the Monarchy than any evils that could result from war.

The language, however, and the objects of M. de Villèle were essentially different from those of his new Colleague: he could by no

means make up his mind that war was essential for the interests of France ; though perhaps he might have been reconciled to the idea of not being able to prevent it, could he have been quite certain that England would, in the event of its taking place, have preserved a strict neutrality.

He made, therefore, every effort to secure the co-operation of the English Ministers, and to induce them to sign the Procès Verbal (already mentioned as agreed upon at Verona), in the hope that, if they would make common cause with France, Spain would be more likely to make such alterations in her Constitution as would justify a suspension of warlike preparations ; and also because, if they could once be brought to countenance the French demands, it would be impossible for England, if those demands should be refused, to join the party which refused them. To tempt England to accede to his wishes, M. de Villèle, knowing how Mr. Canning had laboured to prevent the absolute Monarchs of Europe from arraying themselves against Spain, because the people had forced a Constitution upon the King, declared his grand object, and secret wish, to be, to prevent the three Continental Powers from interfering in the French discussions with that country.

The objection, however, of Mr. Canning to joining in any measures of the sort was one of

principle, and not of degree, and was, consequently, not capable of being overcome by any modifications in the execution of them.

Neither was he to be tempted, nor deceived into thinking that the position of England towards Spain had any thing in common with that of France towards that country. They were, in fact, essentially different.

France was a Power not only prepared to become eventually the enemy of Spain, but one, which, in contemplation of that event, had confederated the great Military Monarchies of Europe against her, and had sounded the war-note of hostility by the collection of armies on the Spanish Frontiers.

England, on the other hand, if she had grievances against Spain, “ never contemplated  
 “ — those grievances apart — engaging in a war  
 “ with her, and least of all on such grounds as  
 “ those of her internal agitations : if the British  
 “ Government looked with anxiety at those  
 “ agitations, it was an anxiety compounded of  
 “ an anxious wish, that they should subside into  
 “ a more settled order of things, better calculated  
 “ for the happiness of Spain herself, and of  
 “ apprehension for the consequences of the ir-  
 “ ritation which the then existing disorders had  
 “ produced in France, consequences which might  
 “ endanger the peace of Europe. The position  
 “ of England was strictly mediatorial, a position



“ from which she was not to be driven; and  
 “ although she might not be invested with the  
 “ office, it was her business to endeavour prac-  
 “ tically to perform the duties of it.”

It was while M. de Villèle was trying to get the countenance of England, and declaring his conviction, that it was through the good offices of the British Government alone that France could look for any thing like an accommodation of her differences with Spain, that it occurred to Mr. Canning, that if Spain could be induced to modify, in some degree, the form of her Constitution, there might yet be opened to France a way of escape out of the difficulties in which her Government was involved, by the mere existence of the Army of Observation; since, by any modifications in the Spanish Constitution, a plausible pretext would have been afforded for the withdrawal and dispersion of that Army. Every thing, indeed, combined to induce the British Government to advise Spain to make some change in her Constitution, by which the French attack on it might be averted; for although Mr. Canning was well aware that M. de Villèle's first efforts, after the establishment of a good understanding between the French and Spanish Governments, would be directed towards supplanting British influence at Madrid, yet, even if M. de Villèle should succeed, he trusted, by straight-forward conduct,

to prevent any serious detriment arising to British interests. On the other hand, a war, once begun, might, long before it was extinguished, involve all Europe in its flames, and be productive of far more disastrous consequences to Great Britain than could arise from the mere diminution, or even annihilation, of her influence at Madrid.

Besides, — putting aside all consideration for British welfare, and supposing that it was certain that the war would be confined to the two parties with whom it originated, it was almost sure to end unfortunately, at any rate, for one, if not for both of the contending parties.

If France were successful, the probability was that the Spanish Constitution would be destroyed, and Spain again condemned to endure the worst of despotisms : if unsuccessful, either from the stubbornness of the resistance of the population, or from the repulse of her armies, then the probability was, that the glories achieved under the tri-coloured cockade would have been contrasted with the disgraces sustained under the white one ; and the dynasty of which this last was the emblem, would for the third, and perhaps for the last, time, have been driven from the inheritance of their fathers. Even, therefore, if the Spanish Constitution had been considerably less faulty than it was, to avoid the risk of such calamities, it would have been wise and proper to have re-

commended some modifications of it ; but how much more was it so, when its imperfections were admitted by every reasonable Spaniard ; and when the Spanish Ministers themselves did not deny, that a revision of it would afford the best chance for its consolidation, and the best safeguard against its destruction by hostile aggression.

It would, therefore, have been but prudent in ministers to have sought out some channel, through which to make known to Spain, if possible, without offending her pride, their opinions upon the subject.

But with such an instrument in their hands with which to work, as the Duke of Wellington, it would have been positively culpable in them to have neglected to employ him. It was impossible that his services to Spain in the field could ever be forgotten. By being in possession of a Spanish title, and a Spanish estate, granted him as a token of national gratitude, he was almost a Spaniard by adoption. He had, therefore, a right to give an opinion, and to tender his counsel as to what he thought hurtful, and what useful in the government of a country to which he was bound by such ties of interest and affection ; a right, too, founded on grounds calculated to disarm all feelings of pride which the Spaniards might feel to listening to the advice of a *foreigner*, when, from circumstances,

that foreigner had become, as it were, a denizen of their country.

Lord Fitzroy Somerset, the intimate and confidential friend of the Duke of Wellington, therefore, was selected, with Mr. Canning's approbation and sanction, to be the bearer of an extra-official communication to the most influential persons at Madrid, expressive of His Grace's opinions of the internal advantages which Spain would derive from assigning to the King, who formed "part of the system established by themselves, such power and prerogatives as would enable him to perform his functions, and protect himself and those employed under him in the performance of their duties for the service of the publick;" for that while the King had no more authority than he then possessed, there would be (as there had been) "perpetual successions of royalist insurrections in one part of the country, or the other." And not only would the internal peace of Spain be secured by such a plan, but the French Army of Observation, which was so endless a source of irritation to her, would necessarily be withdrawn, when all the grounds, upon which the French Government justified its existence, were taken away. :

Such was the wise counsel given by the Duke of Ciudad Rodrigo \* to Spain for her guidance

\* The Duke of Wellington's Spanish title.

at this critical posture of her affairs ; while, at the same time, to satisfy Spain that Lord Fitzroy Somerset's mission was one of friendly counsel only, Sir William à Court was instructed not to interfere ; and Lord Fitzroy was charged to explain, in the most explicit manner, that we asked nothing of Spain, and should act the same whether she followed the Duke's counsel or not. Had the concessions of Spain to our demands for justice enabled the Duke to have tendered this advice at an earlier period, the chances would have been much greater of its being productive of the effect for which it was designed. But untoward events had unfortunately occurred before Lord Fitzroy's arrival at Madrid, whereby the delicacy and difficulty of any attempt on the part of the leading characters in Spain to make any alterations in the Constitution, was considerably increased.

The despatches of the three Allied Powers had then been communicated to the Spanish Government, and their Ministers had withdrawn from Madrid : and more than this, the French despatch, which, in whatever way the manner of communication might induce the Spanish Ministers to consider it, could be looked upon in no other light by the Spanish people than as a demand for a change, and as a threat of war in case of refusal, had been published in the official organ of the French Government. True

it was that M. de Villèle managed that his despatch, (notwithstanding that it left Paris two days later,) should arrive at Madrid two days earlier than the others; and that M. de la Garde contrived to make use of his time to give a favourable impression of the intentions of his Government; yet, in spite of this, the despatch, by the mere fact of its publication, was held out to the nation as a defiance, to which even the appearance of succumbing on the part of the Ministry would probably have roused to their ruin that proverbial pride and obstinacy which stamps the character of almost every Spaniard.

But even these obstacles, great as they were, might have been overcome, if those for whom the Duke of Wellington's memorandum was intended had not been buoyed up with false hopes of assistance from this country; hopes that were not only not founded on any thing said or done by the British Government, but were absolutely entertained in spite of the most positive assurances on its part of its determination to preserve a strict *bonâ fide* neutrality. It is certain that there were some of the most violent English politicians, who persuaded not only the most influential members of the Cortes, but even the Spanish Minister in London, that if the Government of itself would not come to their aid, it would be forced to do so by the indignant voice of the British people.

That these representations were one main cause of the failure of Lord Fitzroy's mission cannot now be doubted; especially if the very great degree of moderation exhibited by the Cortes when the despatches from the three Courts were communicated to that Body is to be taken as a specimen of its temper.

Instead of coming to any violent resolution respecting them, it was determined, on the motion of Messrs. Arguelles and Galiano, to refer them to a Committee, in order that a certain time should be allowed for passion to subside, that the members might come to the discussion of so grave a question with the temper and decorum becoming the Spanish character and nation. At the same time, however, an order was given to the Committee to prepare an address to the King, expressing their determination to die, if necessary, in defence of the Constitutional Throne; but still the Government was so far inclined to listen to moderation, that it waited, at the instance of Sir William à Court, for the three Ministers to demand their passports, instead of sending them, as was at first intended, unasked.

While Mr. Canning was thus endeavouring to produce some changes in Spain which would be likely to secure the preservation of peace, he was unremitting in his representations to the French Ministers, to convince them of the dangers which

they would incur by commencing a war for the avowed purpose of effecting some modifications in a popular Constitution.

But, if a war on such a plea would have been pregnant with danger to the world, even if begun by France, who might have had grounds of annoyance and complaint, from being in the immediate vicinity of Spain, it would have been far more dangerous if the other Continental Members of the Alliance, who could not by possibility have had a similar plea, had been, even in theory, associated with France as partners in the contest. Mr. Canning, therefore, thought it necessary to reply to M. de Montmorency's answer to the Duke of Wellington's note, in which it was declared that the Continental Courts considered the questions between France and Spain as "wholly European," in order to demonstrate that that question was not so considered at Verona, but, on the contrary, was treated and considered as one "peculiarly French."

Such a demonstration was not exactly agreeable to M. de Chateaubriand, who would, notwithstanding, have been too happy to have avoided returning a written rejoinder to it, if he had not been called upon by his Colleagues to do so. Forced, therefore, to adhere to his paradoxical definition, he was placed in the disagreeable necessity of arguing, with the chance of his arguments (as, indeed, they were in the



end,) being published to the world, to prove the truth of a proposition, which, as it implied a contradiction, contained within itself its own refutation.

Mr. Canning, likewise, in his answer, judged it right to repel an insinuation made by M. de Montmorency, that England had abandoned the opinions which she had declared with respect to the affairs of Spain in the celebrated circular note already mentioned, written in May, 1820 ; in which, observed M. de Montmorency, “ Eng-  
“ land, participating in the fears of other Powers,  
“ foresaw cases, in which it might be impossible  
“ to preserve with Spain the relations of good  
“ intelligence and peace.”

“ Now, so far,” said Mr. Canning, “ from  
“ foreseeing cases, and deciding upon the con-  
“ duct which would be applicable to them, the  
“ British Government positively declined to  
“ bind itself by a contingent opinion to any  
“ conditional course of action ;” “ disclaimed  
“ the right of interference in the internal con-  
“ cerns of independent nations, and specifically  
“ stated, that there was perhaps no country of  
“ equal magnitude with Spain, whose internal  
“ disturbances would be so little likely to menace  
“ other States with that direct and imminent  
“ danger which could alone, in exception to  
“ the general rule, justify foreign interference.”

Notwithstanding that this most surely is an

accurate account of the tenour of that note, M. de Chateaubriand undertakes to deny it, and, in support of his position, quotes a part of it, in "which an opinion was pronounced, that an interference in the affairs of Spain would be justifiable, 1st, if the violence of the persons in power led them to an attack against any other States; 2dly, if Spain attempted to possess herself of Portugal, or to effect a re-union of the two States." It is quite true that this opinion is there "pronounced;" but, as Mr. Canning observes in a despatch to Sir Charles Stuart, "it leaves the question of interference in the internal affairs of Spain where it was, as Great Britain would admit, not only prospectively and hypothetically, as respected Spain, but positively and directly as to any Power whatever, that aggression against any of its neighbours would justify war; and specifically, that aggression against Portugal would impose upon Great Britain the duty of protecting her, Ally."

The remainder of M. de Chateaubriand's note consists, 1st, in pointing out the inconveniences to France arising from the state of Spain; and, 2dly, in a declaration implying, that if the King of Spain should be set free, so that the Constitution might be the free gift of the Sovereign, the objections to it would be done away.

With respect to the first, the inconveniences

arising to France, they were stated chiefly to consist in attempts to breed disaffection against the Bourbons; but in making this a matter of complaint, M. de Chateaubriand has not the candour to confess, that France was actually giving shelter to the absolutists of Spain, and allowing them to remain close to the frontiers, where they could carry on their intrigues against the Constitution; that the French Government had been unsuccessful in exciting a rebellion in Spain against the established authorities, and that it had done all in its power to assist a self-constituted rebel Regency. The intrigues complained of were not even imputed *to the Spanish Government*; and therefore, so far were these mutual intrigues from affording France a just ground for war against Spain, that if the balance had been struck between them, the French intrigues would have been found to preponderate in a very large proportion.

With respect to the second, as the idea was more fully developed, and, indeed, openly avowed, in the King of France's Speech, it is only necessary here to observe, as M. de Chateaubriand took merit for his moderation, that Mr. Canning, in commenting upon it in his answer, says, that "the moderation of such demands in no degree justified the mode of enforcing them;" "for Great Britain disclaimed for herself, and denied for other Powers, the right of requiring any

“ changes in the internal institutions of independent States, with the menace of hostile attack in case of refusal.”

During the time that these notes were passing to and fro between the two Foreign Secretaries, there were other official communications taking place, through the medium of the British Ambassador at Paris between them, as well as between Mr. Canning and M. de Villèle.

In all these, however, there still continued to be, as before, a considerable difference between the language of the two Ministers, the hopes expressed by the one, that peace would be preserved, being up to a certain period stronger than those of the other. Both, however, professed the greatest anxiety to maintain peace, if possible; and although M. de Villèle was, probably, sincere in his professions, yet he could not but feel that the War party was so strong that it was more than probable that he should be unable to make an effectual resistance to their exertions.

As for M. de Chateaubriand, war was in his heart, though peace still lingered on his lips.

It was while peace was still talked of by the French Ministers that Mr. Canning received through Sir William à Court, a request from the Spanish Government for the good offices of England, with the view of preventing the breaking out of a war between Spain and France.

Though the request was far from being that fair and open appeal to England, which under the then existing circumstances might have been expected, yet such as it was, it certainly presented a chance for peace, which was not to be thrown away.

As soon as the knowledge of it reached Mr. Canning, he instructed \* Sir Charles Stuart, to acquaint the French Ministers with the overture that had been made by the Spanish Foreign Secretary, M. de San Miguel, and to offer to them Sir William à Court, as a channel of communication with the Spanish Government.

Sir Charles Stuart was also instructed to admit that those concessions implied in the note containing M. San Miguel's request were not so completely satisfactory as to leave nothing to desire ; but in making this admission he was to take care to point out the "peculiar circumstances under which it was written ; for although the more enlightened part of the Government, and of the Cortes of Spain, did not believe the Constitution to be in all its parts usefully and permanently practicable," yet could it reasonably be expected of them at once to declare their readiness to yield to foreign dictation ?

"Let M. de Chateaubriand," said Mr. Canning

\* January 24th.

to the British Ambassador, "ask of himself,  
 " as we in England have asked of ourselves,  
 " whether, if there existed in the frame of the  
 " Government of France, or of England, re-  
 " spectively, all those imperfections which either  
 " theoretical criticism, or factious clamour im-  
 " putes to them, we should consent, even if we  
 " were already resolved to probe and to reform  
 " those imperfections, to do so on the demand  
 " of a foreign Power, made under the menace  
 " of foreign war, as the penalty of refusal."

" Let M. de Chateaubriand," continued Mr. Canning, " further ask himself, whether even by  
 " the mode of making that demand that part of  
 " the Spanish Government or nation, which  
 " might be willing to undertake those amelior-  
 " ations of the present Constitution of Spain,  
 " without which it is alleged to be unsafe to  
 " her neighbours, has not been placed in a situ-  
 " ation of great difficulty.

" The Cabinet of France, as well as that of  
 " England, must know enough of the course of  
 " popular Governments, and of the influence of  
 " popular parties, to be aware that a proposition,  
 " even upon indifferent matters, thrown loose  
 " before the publick at the same time that it is  
 " submitted to the Government is one of which  
 " the Government is no longer master; how  
 " much more so, when that proposition is of a

“ nature to appeal to the strongest passions of  
 “ mankind,—to pride, to resentment, to pa-  
 “ triotism,—and, consequently, to array and  
 “ exasperate all those passions against a decision,  
 “ which could only be expected from the calmest  
 “ temper, and most deliberate reflection. Is it  
 “ not plain that the same proposition completely  
 “ changes its nature according to the manner in  
 “ which it is brought forward? And that a  
 “ proposition, which if submitted through the  
 “ regular channels of diplomacy, to a Sovereign,  
 “ or to a Cabinet, might be matter of whole-  
 “ some advice or amicable remonstrance, when  
 “ addressed to the mass of a nation aloud, and  
 “ in the presence of all the world, becomes a  
 “ taunt and a defiance?

“ The publication of the despatch to M. la  
 “ Garde, while it was yet on its road to Madrid,  
 “ was defended by the alleged necessity of tran-  
 “ quillising the public mind at Paris; but if there  
 “ was a public mind at Paris requiring to be  
 “ tranquillised, there was a public mind at  
 “ Madrid liable to be inflamed; and if it was so  
 “ desirable for the Cabinet of the Thuilleries to  
 “ carry with them the general sense and feeling  
 “ of the French people, how tremendous was the  
 “ task imposed upon the Government of Spain,  
 “ when a concession was exacted from them,  
 “ such as the strongest Government would find

“ it difficult to make, and when they were at the  
 “ same moment deprived of the opportunity of  
 “ preparing and reconciling (if that had been  
 “ their wish) the feelings of the people of Spain  
 “ to that concession ! ”

These observations were not made by Mr. Canning with a view to inculcate the conduct of the French Government, but merely for the purpose of reminding M. de Chateaubriand “ of  
 “ the situation in which the French Ministers  
 “ had placed themselves towards Spain, by the  
 “ manner in which their first alternative for war  
 “ had been propounded; and of impressing  
 “ upon them the necessity of not omitting any  
 “ opportunity, however little promising they  
 “ might deem it, for again stating to Spain the  
 “ grounds of their dissatisfaction, and the nature of their demands.”

The remainder of the instruction was employed in endeavouring to convince them of the small likelihood there was of their securing by war the objects which they professed to seek by it.

This communication reached Paris the day \* before the meeting of the Chambers; and since the French Ministers (as has been stated) still *talked* of peace, they did not, as indeed they

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well could not, on their part, reject the proffered good offices of England, which the Spanish Government, on its part, had solicited.

But although they had the decency not to refuse, they could not have accepted them, in the hope that any practical consequence would result from them. It is evident indeed that the French Government had already decided on <sup>is</sup> war, from the fact that orders, at least <sup>on</sup> <sup>ways</sup> previously, had been sent to M. de <sup>har</sup> Garde at Madrid to return without delay, and it is only reasonable to suppose that the tone to be taken in the King of France's Speech to the Legislative Bodies, was settled at the same time with this decisive step.

There are strong grounds for believing that a vigorous effort was made by M. de Villèle against this warlike determination.

But whether the French Premier did or did not contend against the war, one thing is certain, that he was content to continue to hold his office, and, consequently, therefore, to take his share of the heavy responsibility which attached to the adoption of counsels of which there is reason to believe that he did not approve.

M. de Villèle, therefore, must come in for his share of the reprobation, which the monstrous doctrines put into the mouth of the

King of France, at the opening of the Chambers, called forth almost universally, throughout Europe.

Indeed a Speech could hardly have been penned which was so well calculated to arouse

The King, in his speech to the Chambers, began with describing the flourishing state of France, and the blessings which she had derived from her return to legitimate rule: he then proceeded to consider her relations with Spain. "Divine justice permits," said he, "that after having for a long time made other nations suffer the terrible effects of our disorders, we should ourselves be exposed to dangers brought about by similar calamities among a neighbouring people. I have made every endeavour to guarantee the security of my people, and to preserve Spain herself from the extremity of misfortune. The infatuation, with which the representations made at Madrid have been rejected, leaves little hope of preserving peace. I have ordered the recall of my minister. One hundred thousand Frenchmen, commanded by a prince of my family — by him whom my heart delights to call my son — are ready to march, invoking the God of St. Louis, for the sake of preserving the throne of Spain to a descendant of Henry IV. — of saving that fine kingdom from its ruin, and of reconciling it with Europe. Our stations are about to be reinforced in those places where our maritime commerce has need of that protection. Cruisers shall be established at all points, wherever our arrivals can possibly be annoyed. If war is inevitable, I will use all my endeavours to confine its circle, to limit its duration: it will be undertaken only to conquer peace, which the state of Spain would render impossible. *Let Ferdinand VII. be free to give to his people institutions which they cannot hold but from him, and*

against its authors all the better feelings of mankind, and to awake especially the indignation of the British people. It contained, in the first place, a declaration of war (for it could be considered in no other light) against a neighbouring Power, with scarcely one word to explain its necessity, or to prove its justice.

It asserted that the war was to be undertaken as well "for the sake of preserving the Throne of Spain to a Bourbon Prince," as "to set Ferdinand free to give institutions to his people, which," it observed, "they could only hold from him."

Now if there be one principle which it is the duty of any Government to hold more sacred than another, it is, that, before recourse is had to the dire extremity of war, both its necessity and its justice shall be demonstrated, but, beyond

"which, by securing their tranquillity, would dissipate the just inquietudes of France. Hostilities shall cease from that moment. I make, gentlemen, before you, a solemn engagement on this point. I was bound to lay before you the state of our foreign affairs. It was for me to deliberate. I have done it maturely. I have consulted the dignity of my crown — the honour and security of France. Gentlemen, we are Frenchmen; we shall always be agreed to defend such interests." — *Speech of the King of France on opening the session of the Chambers, Jan. 28. 1823.*

every thing, its justice. By this document, however, the French Ministers appeared not to think it incumbent upon them to do either the one or the other, and had even the hardihood to avow as their reasons for war; first, the support of a principle which, if once admitted, as justifying an appeal to arms, would afford a perpetual cause for war against Great Britain; and next to give a compact (the Family compact) which France was bound by compact never even to attempt to renew.

Perhaps there never was an occasion in which the opinions of the people of this country were so united as they were in their condemnation, and abhorrence of this document. • Similar feelings to those which had once been directed against the usurper of France and Spain in 1808 were now excited against the venerable Monarch of the former Kingdom. Nay, the union of sentiment was more perfect; for then the Jacobins were unwilling to inculcate their idol; but on this occasion they, and the Whigs and Tories, were all, as one man, of the same way of thinking, from one end of the country to the other.

Although this Speech could hardly be considered in any other light than as a declaration of war, M. de Chateaubriand gave a curious specimen of diplomacy, by directing the French Chargé d’Affaires, “ when he communi-

"cated it to Mr. Canning, to accompany the  
 "communication by a more profuse expression  
 "of the desires of the French Government for  
 "accommodation, and by a more profuse de-  
 "claration of their wishes for the good services  
 "of the British Government in producing that  
 "accommodation, than had ever been made  
 "by them at any previous period of the trans-  
 "actions."

This might have been a clever expedient ;  
 but it certainly did not deceive Mr. Canning,  
 who saw through its nature. The speech was  
 made with a view to satisfy the violent war  
 party in France, who certainly composed the  
 great majority of the Chambers. The profes-  
 sions of a desire for peace seemed evidently  
 made, not because any sincere wish to persevere  
 it was entertained, or any real hope of it was  
 cherished, but from the fear that a speech so  
 singularly violent might excite to an hostile de-  
 monstration the British Government.

Mr. Canning, therefore, "while on the one  
 "hand he would not willingly either risk the  
 "misfortune, or incur the responsibility of closing,  
 "by any act of his, the door of accommodation,  
 "which the French Government declared to be  
 "still open ; yet, on the other hand, the sus-  
 "pensive and conditional particle in the Speech  
 "of the King of France, on which the possi-

“ bilities of peace were supposed to hang, was  
 “ so much obscured by the ambiguous character  
 “ of the condition with which it was connected,  
 “ that he found it very difficult to estimate its  
 “ real value.”

Since it was possible, however, to put a double construction upon the offensive principle put forth in one part of the Speech, he determined that, if the French Government would adopt the construction (which, perhaps, the words were hardly qualified to bear), that, “ in order  
 “ to give stability to any modifications of the  
 “ present system in Spain, and to afford sufficient assurance to France to justify her in discontinuing her warlike preparations, the King  
 “ of Spain must be party, and freely consenting  
 “ to such modifications,” — “ then the British  
 “ Government would be most happy to continue  
 “ at Madrid their amicable, and earnest endeavours to ascertain the means, and to recommend the policy, of accommodation.” But if it was to be construed, that “ the free institutions of the Spanish people could only be  
 “ legitimately held from the spontaneous gift of  
 “ the Sovereign, first restored to absolute power,  
 “ and then divesting himself of such portion of  
 “ that power as he might think proper to part  
 “ with ;” then it was a principle “ to which the  
 “ Spanish nation could not be expected to sub-

“scribe, nor could any British Statesmen uphold  
“or defend it.”

Nor could the British Government advise any people “in adopting changes, however  
“beneficial, to admit the principle on which  
“(according to this latter construction) the  
“Speech of the King of France would be understood to prescribe them. It was, indeed,  
“a principle which struck at the root of the  
“British Constitution.”

“The British Government,” observed Mr. Canning, “does not presume to hold out its  
“own political institutions as the only practical system of national happiness and freedom.  
“It does not presume to question the freedom  
“and happiness which France enjoys under  
“institutions, emanating from the will of the  
“Sovereign, and described, as *octroyées* from  
“the Throne. But it could not countenance  
“a pretension on the part of France to make  
“her example a rule for other nations; and  
“still less could it admit a peculiar right in  
“France to force that example specifically on  
“Spain, in virtue of the consanguinity of the  
“reigning dynasties of those two Kingdoms.  
“This latter reason would, on the contrary,  
“suggest recollections and considerations, which  
“must obviously make it impossible for Great  
“Britain to be the advocate of pretensions  
“founded on it.”

While Mr. Canning addressed this language to the French Government through Sir Charles Stuart, it was resolved by the Government, in consequence of the character of the King of France's Speech, to omit in the King's Speech what it had been settled to insert,—viz., the fixed intention of England to preserve, in the contest, a strict neutrality. The King of France's Speech certainly did not vary that purpose; but it was one thing to vary it, and another, in case the Government might see reason to vary it, to put it out of their power to do so by proclaiming neutrality to the world in the King's Speech.

Thus were the French Ministers left in doubt as to the intentions of England; and though, to a certain degree, they entertained strong hopes that She did not intend to join in the conflict against them, yet no mention of such determination being made in the King's Speech, coupled with the reception that that part of it which related to the position of France and Spain, by which the concurrence of all political parties, and of all parts of the country, in condemnation of the French war with Spain was manifested, considerably increased the difficulties of their situation.

The expectations of the French Ministers with regard to the impression which the Speech of their King would produce at Madrid, was



quite as unreasonable as their professions of a wish to maintain peace to the English Ministry, after they had apparently, and probably in reality, taken their decision against it, by making a public declaration of the most warlike sentiments.

They pretended, still, to be "prepossessed" with the notion, that the tone assumed by "the King of France was well calculated to make the Spaniards give way, and grounded their hopes of preventing a war upon the results of that Speech." And although such notions, if founded, as they were in fact pretended to be, on the expectations of an absolute party acquiring an ascendancy at Madrid, might have been intelligible, yet when the "*favourable*" effect likely to be produced by it was asserted, as constituting another equally strong reason for such expectation, it is as difficult to imagine in what way it could possibly have operated "*favourably*" to the French cause in the then temper of the Government and Cortes (not to mention the populace) at Madrid, as it is impossible not to question the sincerity of the professions of the French Ministers. Mr. Canning, assuming that they were sincere, too truly warned them that they were mistaken.

Of a piece with this language of M. de Chateaubriand, was his immediate adoption of that construction of the principle, put forth in the

King of France's Speech, which construction Mr. Canning had suggested as not objectionable.

This adoption, however, enabled Mr. Canning to continue his exertions at Madrid ; and since he was not without hope that "some impression" might have been made upon the French "Ministers, by the unequivocal disclosure of the temper of England, which might have led to a reconsideration of their plans, if it were met at the same time with any reasonable facility on the part of Spain, which would afford to France a retreat without dishonour," he directed \* Sir William à Court to urge upon the Spanish Government, by every argument in his power, the necessity of its resolving in some way to modify the Constitution, in order to avert the threatened invasion.

Too great security and incredulousness as to the designs of France, certainly had contributed to lead, if they did not do so entirely, the Spanish Ministers into a most perilous error. Whether if they had been earlier satisfied as to the reality of those designs, they would have taken another course, and have considered seriously of such modifications as might have disarmed France of all plausible pretext for interference, may be matter of question ; but, undoubtedly, they had not viewed the importance and necessity of some

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decision on that point in their true light. They had supposed France to be irresolute ; they had misconstrued a partial change in the French Ministry into an abandonment of warlike counsels ; they had been misled by the Duke de San Lorenzo, (himself, in all probability, purposely deceived at Paris,) and by the language of the French Minister at Madrid.

Mr. Canning hoped, therefore, that when they waked to the consciousness of impending war, which they had not taken any serious step to avert, that that consciousness would lead, not to desperation, but to an attempt to regain lost opportunities. If, indeed, the Spanish Government had made any proposal of immediate, and some promise of future, modifications, an appeal might have been made to France, to have paused, at least, before she employed her arms, if not to have laid them down. If Spain would have done so, the position in which the English Government had placed itself by the Speech from the Throne, backed as it then was by the support of Parliament and the nation, would have enabled it to speak to France in a tone of more "authoritative persuasion." At the same time it must be acknowledged, that France was too far advanced to retreat, unless She had some plausible plea for a change of counsel ; and that plea could only be afforded by enabling Her to affirm that something had been done, or pro-

mised, which removed Her apprehensions of danger.

But while Mr. Canning endeavoured thus to convince the Spanish Ministers that they could only prevent war with France by some modifications of their Constitution, he did not omit to implore them not to "fall into a false security, "by placing their hopes of extrication from "their difficulties in a war between France and "this country."

The British Government had resolved on preserving a strict neutrality, and that resolution could not be too distinctly impressed upon the minds of the Spanish Ministers; for although "neither the means, nor the determination would "be wanting to vindicate, in any case that might "arise, our honour and our interests, neither "the one nor the other were immediately affected by the impending conflict between "France and Spain."

The anxiety of the British Government was to prevent the commencement of a war in Europe, and to delay the execution of the French projects. Such was the precariousness of the resolutions of the French Cabinet, and of the tenure of those who ruled in it, that a little time gained might have put an end altogether to the project of invasion.

At the moment when Mr. Canning directed Sir William à Court to press the Spanish Go-

vernment to make propositions which could be communicated to the French Government, there was just time for one communication before the commencement of hostilities. "Urge, therefore, in every possible way," said Mr. Canning to the English Minister, — "urge the Spanish Government to seize the passing moment, ere it be too late to profit by it." \*

This was the last effort made by Mr. Canning, at Madrid, to prevent the breaking out of the war.

With the French Ministers, however, his efforts ceased no very long time before that event; for whether they were likely to be successful or not, he was determined that he would at least have the consolation of knowing, that, no exertions had been spared, on his part, to prevent a calamity of which no one could presume to foretell the extent.

The inclination, however, towards pacifick counsels which Mr. Canning hoped the French Ministers might have felt in consequence of the events which took place at the opening of the British Parliament, were, unfortunately, in a considerable degree, counterbalanced by the conduct of their own Chambers.

Addresses as strong, and as violent, as their King's Speech, were voted by large majorities

in both of them; and an attempt in the Chamber of Deputies to carry an amendment, manifesting a doubt respecting the probability of the war, in contradistinction to its being inevitable, excited the greatest agitation, and was rejected by a considerable majority: and the most violent condemnation of the conduct of the Government proceeded from the party which maintained, that war had been too long delayed.

It was in answer to these attacks that the avowal of having given every assistance to the Spanish insurgents, and of "having stirred up insurrection in Spain, whenever, and wherever it was possible," escaped M. de Villèle's lips.

It appeared, therefore, by the confession of the head of the French Government, that at the very time that the Representative of that Government was carrying its complaints against Spain to Verona, as if all the injuries were inflicted upon France, that efforts were actually being made by France to overthrow by treachery the Spanish Constitution!

This avowal was only intended, as it would seem, to gratify the ears of the audience before whom it was made, since it was omitted in the report of the Speech in the *Moniteur*; and some opposition Journals that had inserted it had proceedings instituted against them for so doing, on the ground of its being a breach of privilege to publish the debates of the Chamber of Peers.

At the same time, and almost in the same breath, that to satisfy the War party M. de Villèle made this confession, he thought it necessary to make, as it were, a counter-declaration, to satisfy the opposite side of the necessity of war; viz. that "it was necessary to attack the South, "in order to escape the North;" in other words, that if France would not put down the Spanish Constitution, Russia would do it for her; from which observation it was intended that it should be inferred that it was better to attack a weak Power, than either to be attacked by Russia for not doing so, or to submit to a Russian Army passing through the French territory: a remark, which implied that the Emperor of Russia had much more influence in causing the invasion of Spain, than was in fact the case. Further, M. de Villèle asserted, that he had all along wished for peace, but that, now things were gone so far, war was necessary; and therefore they should appeal to the valour of the French soldiers to restore Ferdinand to liberty, and to re-establish the work of Louis the Fourteenth, by the union of the two branches of the House of Bourbon.

Such were the reasons given by M. de Villèle for undertaking so hazardous and unjust an enterprise. It is true, it has not produced all the evils which might have been dreaded from it; but it is impossible not to view with sur-

prise the short-sightedness of a policy which in such a state of the world could venture to stir elements so dangerous, and to risk, perhaps, the stability of the then existing settlement in France, for the unnecessary object, of renewing the Family Compact with Spain. M. de Chateaubriand's observations on this occasion were unimportant.

In the Chamber of Peers the most remarkable speech was from the Prince de Talleyrand against the war. "It is now," said that wary politician, "just sixteen years since, commanded by him who at that time ruled the world to deliver my opinion on the projected attack on Spain, I had the misfortune to displease that ruler by unveiling the future, and pointing out the multitude of dangers that would arise out of an aggression equally rash and unjust. Disgrace was the reward of my sincerity. And after so long an interval, I find myself, by a singular destiny, under the necessity of renewing the same warnings and the same counsels."

M. de Talleyrand proceeded to expose the injustice of undertaking a war on the motives avowed for the one in contemplation, and appears to have made a considerable impression. Whether what fell from him once more aroused the alarms of M. de Villèle, as to the consequences of the course which he was pursuing, is



uncertain ; but it appears that he, as well as his colleague M. de Chateaubriand, about this time again began to renew in a stronger way the expression of their desire for peace ; and the latter stated that the French Government would reconsider the subject if the “ Spanish Negotiators “ would engage at a future period to modify “ the Constitution, and in the mean time would “ prove their good faith by restoring Ferdinand “ to his physical liberty, by allowing him to frequent the baths ; by a general amnesty ; by “ the establishment of laws regulating the press ; “ and by a change of Ministry.”

It could not be expected, however, that these conditions, even if they had not been clogged by the last, which was no other than insisting upon a change of the Negotiators themselves, would have been listened to by the Spanish Government.

The reception of the King of France's Speech at Madrid had fully justified all Mr. Canning's anticipations, and proved beyond a doubt the erroneousness of M. de Villèle's, and M. de Chateaubriand's representations, as to the effect it was likely to produce upon the Cortes and the Government. While the first ebullitions of anger lasted, the contest seemed to be which party should adhere most pertinaciously to things exactly as they were, for the express purpose of marking the universal resentment of a tone so

domineering and intolerant. But after the excitement of the moment had a little subsided, there was a re-action in the feelings, not of the Ministers indeed, but amongst some of the most influential persons at Madrid; and the next accounts from Sir William à Court were more favourable as to the state of public opinion, and held out a hope that some Members of the Cortes would urge on the Ministers, further negotiations to prevent a war.

The Government seemed likewise to be in a better condition to assert their legitimate authority, as it had had recourse to the decided measure of shutting up the Landaburian Club, which had for some time, in a most unconstitutional manner, exercised considerable control over the deliberations of the Legislature. The proposal, in the Cortes, of a general amnesty, showed also a disposition to adopt a milder system than had hitherto prevailed. And, lastly, the avowed will of the King, to admit any reasonable compromise upon the subject of His Royal Prerogatives, which, it had been before supposed, His Majesty would require to be maintained to the fullest extent of absolute despotism, presented a fair opening for an attempt to reconcile the conflicting interests and prejudices, of the several parties, whose dissensions had so long distracted the Spanish nation. Mr. Canning, therefore, determined, since the

language of the French Ministers had become much more pacifick, to place before them all these grounds for entertaining hopes that Spain might yet accomplish the work of her internal regeneration, and at the same time to make another attempt to induce them to delay their hostile declaration. Further, he endeavoured to convince them of the dangers, which they must necessarily encounter in entering into a war, under any circumstances ; but especially, when it should be understood, as the Speeches of the King of France and his First Minister had given it to be understood, that the war was in fact not so much a war of necessity as of ambition ; that it was to recover French influence, and re-establish the Bourbon connection at Madrid.

Perhaps there never was a question upon which the sense of nations was so unanimously pronounced as on the injustice of this war.

Even the two German Allies of France had, by this time, begun to be as much alarmed at its probable consequences as they were strangers to its principle. For it should be remembered, that France was not about to act any longer upon the principle to which they consented at Verona, which was purely defensive : there the three cases, which could be foreseen, were defined, and neither of those definitions comprised the case on which the French Government now meditated hostilities.

Sir Charles Stuart was therefore directed to urge all these considerations upon the French Ministers, both as reasons for delay, as well as for relaxing in their tone of unqualified menace, and reproach, in order to give an opportunity to those persons at Madrid, who were willing to adopt modifications, to propose them; to do which, while that tone was persevered in, it was almost impossible for any individual, or even any party, to venture.

The arguments of Mr. Canning, however, did not alter the conduct of the French Ministers. Between the time when (as has been said) they again talked of their desire for peace, and the communication to them of these arguments, they were satisfied by the fresh debates that had taken place, that to maintain their places they must consent to carry into execution the views of the dominant party in the French Chambers.

There were not, however, wanting, amongst the men of whom these Chambers were composed, those who condemned in strong and energetic language the principle by which the war with Spain was justified; and on the occasion\* of a vote for the appropriation of funds for its support, several Deputies spoke with great eloquence against the measure, one of whom, M. de Lessert, quoted the Report made to the

Sénate in 1808, by the Minister of Buonaparte, in favour of war against Spain, and showed that Buonaparte's defence was precisely the same as that now adopted by Messrs. Villèle and Chateaubriand. The former of these Ministers indignantly denied that there was any resemblance between the conduct of the French Government at this period and that of Napoleon when he invaded Spain; but said little in defence of the principle of intervention.

He left that task to his Colleague, who made a most elaborate speech \* in justification both of its principle and policy.

This speech must be considered as the manifesto of the French Government, declarative of the principles and causes by which they sought to justify their invasion of Spain. It will, therefore, be well to stop a little to examine it.

M. de Chateaubriand commenced by at once broadly admitting the principle that one country has not a right to interfere in the internal concerns of another, except when its essential interests are in danger of "*perishing*" from the condition of the internal concerns of that other country. All, therefore, that M. de Chateaubriand had to do, to prove the justice of his cause, was, clearly to make out, that the case of France with Spain came within the meaning of

his exception ; the principle, and the exception to it, being undeniable.

Since England was the Power which had been the loudest in its condemnation of the war, M. de Chateaubriand appears to have been very anxious to justify the conduct of France by the language and the example of England. Mr. Canning was the disciple of Mr. Pitt. If, therefore, M. de Chateaubriand could prove that France was then holding the same language, and following the same course, which were held and followed by Mr. Pitt's Government in 1793, when England declared war against France, it would, if it did not establish the rectitude of that into which the French Government were about to enter, at least involve Mr. Canning in all the inconsistency and blame of having once approved a similar proceeding. M. de Chateaubriand, therefore, quoted the declaration of war by England against France in 1793 ; in which, after having dwelt upon the horrors of the French Revolution, it is said, that " such a state of things could not exist in France without involving in one common danger all the neighbouring Powers, without giving them the right, and imposing upon them the duty, to stop the progress of an evil which only existed by the violation of all law, and by the subversion of the fundamental principles of civilized society."—

“England would not dispute with France the  
 “right of reforming her laws, would never wish  
 “to change by external violence the form of  
 “Government of an independent State. She  
 “only desired to do so because it had be-  
 “come essential to the repose and safety of  
 “other Powers. Under these circumstances, she  
 “required from France to put an end to the  
 “anarchy which prevailed throughout her terri-  
 “tory, and to establish a Government, founded  
 “on the acknowledged principles of universal  
 “justice, and able to preserve with other na-  
 “tions the accustomed relations of amity and  
 “peace.”

It then went on to say, “that England would  
 “grant assistance and protection to all those in  
 “France, who would declare for a Monar-  
 “chical Government, and would withdraw  
 “themselves from the despotism of a bloody  
 “anarchy.”

“Gentlemen,” said M. de Chateaubriand,  
 when he had finished his quotation, “what think  
 “you of this declaration? Have you not  
 “thought that you have heard the Speech of  
 “our King at the opening of this present  
 “Session? England promised succours to the  
 “French Royalists, and we are found fault with  
 “because we have protected the Royalists of  
 “Spain. England demands from France, as the  
 “price of peace, the establishment of a Govern-

“ment, capable of maintaining its engagements,  
 “and the ordinary relations of amity and justice,  
 “and we have not a right to demand from  
 “Spain, for our safety, the establishment of in-  
 “stitutions *legitimattzed* by the liberty of Fer-  
 “dinand.”

But those who will call to mind the circumstances under which this declaration of the English Government was written, will at once see the fallacy of M. de Chateaubriand's arguments, and the incorrectness of the parallel which he endeavoured to establish.

In the first place, it is said, “That the then  
 “state of things in France was such, that it could  
 “not exist without involving in one common  
 “danger all the neighbouring Powers;” and was not the proof of this to be found in the celebrated decree of the Convention, offering assistance and protection to every discontented faction, in every country, that would take up arms against the established authorities?

Does not the mere passing of such a decree as this demonstrate the truth of the assertion, that the “state of things in France was such,  
 “that it could not exist without involving in  
 “one common danger all the neighbouring  
 “Powers?” But where could M. de Chateaubriand find any proof that the then state of things in Spain was such, that its mere existence involved France in danger?



It might be, certainly, that, the Government of France being ill disposed to that of Spain, the latter might think proper to insult or to attack France, in a way which would justify France in declaring war; and so might any other Government, whether an absolute or limited Monarchy; but this cause of war is one which must not be confounded with that cause which arises from an internal state of things in a country, the mere existence of which is dangerous to neighbouring Powers. What made the internal state of things in France in 1793 dangerous to neighbouring states was not any acts of positive physical aggression against them: these might have been committed as well by Louis XVI. as by the Convention; but the proclaimed determination of a design to assist, *upon principle*, all the disaffected persons of all nations, in any attempts that they might make to overthrow the Governments under which they lived.

Now the Spanish Government had not passed a decree, offering assistance to the discontented in France against the Bourbon Government; on the contrary, it had, as a Government, done the utmost in its power to abstain from giving any offence whatsoever to France.

Again, — were the offers of succour and protection to the French Royalists held out by England under the same circumstances as those under which the French Government gave their

aid to the Spanish Royalists? Certainly not: such aid was not proffered by England, until she openly declared war against France.

The laws of civilized warfare allow of the employment of deserters, and discontented subjects. This aid, therefore, was promised according to the established rules of legitimate hostility. But was this the case with France? Did the French Government wait till it declared war against Spain, to give aid to Her rebellious subjects? Or did it, while it had an Ambassador accredited to the Constitutional Government of Spain, secretly stir up insurrection against that Government? If it did, and M. de Chateaubriand does not deny, while M. de Villèle avowed that it did, *that* constitutes the essential difference between the two actions, and makes that which was just and open in the one, unjust and treacherous in the other.

But to return to M. de Chateaubriand's way of making out his exception to the rule which he lays down, of non-interference in the internal concerns of an independent State. And here again he quoted the language of the British Government in his justification, and said that Lord Castlereagh "maintained the right of any State to interfere, when its own safety, or its essential interests, were seriously compromised by the internal transactions of another State." Although this principle is rather broadly laid

down, the words "seriously compromised" being somewhat ambiguous, yet as this is the exception made by M. de Chateaubriand to his general rule, it will be but fair to see whether he was able to bring the case of France against Spain within the range of this comprehensive reservation.

The proposition which he had to demonstrate then, is, that the essential interests of France were "seriously compromised" by the internal transactions of Spain.

1st. "Then," he said, "the essential interests of France were injured by the state of suffering in which the Revolution of Spain held a portion of French Commerce; France was obliged to keep a maritime force in the American seas, on account of the pirates who infested them, produced by the anarchy in Spain."

There can be no doubt that the injuries committed on French Commerce by vessels under the Spanish Flag, if unredressed, afforded justifiable ground for war by France against Spain. But then it is quite clear, that, so far from these being internal transactions, they are to all intents and purposes external aggressions: and, therefore, though reparation from Spain for such injuries may be very properly demanded, yet, until such reparation should be refused or delayed upon the plea of inability to give it, the mere fact of the

aggression could not justify war, much less hostile interference to effect a change in the form of the Spanish Government.

M. de Chateaubriand certainly endeavoured to lay all the fault of such piracies at the door of the Constitution ; but he here stated what is not correct. Piracies were full as frequent under the Flag of the Absolute, as they were under that of the Constitutional, King of Spain, as the Archives of the British Embassy at Madrid will testify ; and therefore the argument for the necessity of a change in the Spanish Government, applied with greater force to that of the Absolute King, Ferdinand, under whose Government the piratical system commenced, than to that of the Constitution, under whom that system was permitted to continue.

2dly. " The French Provinces, bordering on Spain, were unable to carry on so lucrative a Commerce with that country as they had been accustomed to do, on account of the disorders on the other side of the Pyrenees."

Without entering into the question, whether one country's trading less than usual with another is a just reason for waging war, it is merely necessary to observe, that if there were disorders on the other side of the Pyrenees, they were, according to the admission of the French Ministers, fomented by themselves ; and therefore the idea of visiting Spain with punishment

for what they themselves had produced, is one of the most singular notions of justice that ever fell from the lips of a Statesman.

3dly.. “The essential interests of France were  
“compromised, because the persons of the  
“French Consuls in Spanish Ports were threat-  
“ened with violence. French vessels were re-  
“pulsed from Spanish Harbours, and French  
“Territory violated three times by Spanish  
“Soldiers.”

Of the first two, of these three complaints, M. de Chateaubriand did not give a single instance; of themselves they would not afford sufficient ground for war; it would only be upon reparation being demanded and refused, that they would do so; and it does not appear that the French Government even complained of them to that of Spain, much less that its complaints had been passed by unheeded. Of the last, if French Territory were violated by Spanish Soldiers, how did it happen? it was in pursuit of those Insurgents whom France had instigated to rebel.

4thly, “The essential interests of France were  
“compromised, because She was obliged to keep  
“up an Army of Observation on the Spanish  
“Frontier, on account of the Civil War which  
“ragèd within it.” Again, who produced that Civil War? French intrigues. The French Government had only to have ceased prosecuting

them, and the pretence for the Army of Observation would have ceased likewise.

These reasons were all that the French Government put forth, by one of its ablest Ministers, in defence of the justice of the measure.

In defence of its policy, M. de Chateaubriand certainly gave two reasons of a rather more substantial nature. The first of which was, that if the Government of Spain should, (as he assumed that it would, if the "Constitution of Cadiz should continue to exist much longer) "become a Republick, that it would form "alliances, and create relations, which in future "wars would considerably weaken by division "the French forces; for before the Revolution, "France, guarded on the South by the Mediterranean, on the West by Spain, on the North "by the Ocean, and on the East by Switzerland, "had only a short line, well fortified, between "the North and the East to defend. But if "She were to have to defend both her North-eastern and Western Frontiers at the same "instant, she would certainly be weakened, and "perhaps exhausted, by her efforts."

The other, that France "by acting by herself, "would prove her independence, and that the "complete reconciliation of all Frenchmen "would be brought about under the tent, as "companions in arms soon become friends."

There may be something more plausible in these arguments for the policy of the war, than in those he brought forward in defence of its justice.

As far as they go, they are certainly arguments in its favour ; but then, as the arguments against its policy are not stated, and those on the one side fairly balanced against those on the other, they cannot be admitted to be conclusive.

After some other Deputies had spoken, the discussion was adjourned to the next day ; on which occasion M. Manuel, the Deputy from La Vendée, a liberal, and a man of considerable talent, proceeded to answer M. de Chateaubriand. In the course of his speech, he made an allusion to the death of Louis XVI., in which he held out that event as a warning to those who were now about to wage war with Spain, lest by so doing they should bring about a similar catastrophe. In speaking of that execution, M. Manuel said, "that Revolutionary France found it *necessary* to defend herself " by new strength and energy—" &c. Before he could finish his sentence, all the war party rose up, and raised such a clamour, that the President, finding it vain to attempt to appease the tumult, adjourned the sitting. Next day, in spite of M. Manuel's explanation, it was decreed that he should be expelled the Chamber for the re-

mainder of the Session ; and when he had been ejected from the Chamber, by force, the rest of his party, to the number of sixty, having signed a protest against his expulsion, seceded from the Chamber, and persevered in their secession until the prorogation. The consequence of this was, that the war party had it all their own way ; the vote of supply for the expenses of the war was carried unanimously, and no discussions of any interest took place during the remainder of the Session.

From the time of the secession of the sixty Deputies, the language of the French Ministers to England was the same as before. They “wished” as much as ever for peace ; but they still continued their preparations for war, which were, indeed, carried on with increased activity.

Meanwhile, the transactions at Madrid did not increase the chances of peace. The dismissal of the Nuncio, because the Pope, his master, objected to receive the Spanish Minister accredited to the Papal Court, on account of that Minister having voted for certain measures against the interest of the Church, had only served to spread disaffection amongst the more religious part of the community. The capital was thrown into alarm by the near approach to it of the insurgent forces, which again, under the command of Bessieres, had taken up arms in defence of the prerogatives of the absolute



King, and there was strong ground for believing this movement of the Rebel Chief, who was quickly driven back and defeated by the Constitutional Forces, was not made without concert with the Royalist part of the populace at Madrid. The Ministers possessed but a very small portion of that power which ought to belong to an Executive Government; and though the shutting up of the Landaburian Club, and the promise of a general amnesty, for a time gave hopes that a better order of things was about to spring up, yet such hopes were not realized; and even the amnesty, when it was published, so little deserved the name, that it only afforded fresh food for disappointment to those who looked for any good being derived from its publication.

The language of M. de San Miguel was, that the Continental Powers, and France in particular, by the withdrawal of her Minister, accompanied by the preposterous proposal that Ferdinand should go to the Bidassoa, to treat with the Duke D'Angoulême, together with the tone assumed by Louis the Eighteenth at the opening of the Chambers, had made it a point of honour, at any rate at that moment, not to entertain even the question of modifications. On the other hand, however, a general wish for peace, as well as for some revision of the Constitution, pervaded the great majority of the

nation. But then, unfortunately, there was no man who had either sufficient courage to propose, or sufficient influence to carry, any measures of the sort.

The party at Madrid, called *doctrinaires*, were the great obstacle to any arrangement. From being decided enemies of the Ministers, they had become their chief support, because they were aware that no concessions would be consented to by them; and this all the while that they were convinced that modifications in the Constitution were necessary, and that they would have consented to their adoption, if they could have been brought about constitutionally. But they were lost in their theories, and were willing to sacrifice every thing for a word.

Mr. Canning's answer to M. San Miguel's application for the good offices of the British Government reached Madrid almost\* at the same time with the Speech of the King of France, which (as has been before stated) produced an effect which would have been more than sufficient to prevent any good resulting from the interference of England.

Neither did the arguments which Sir William à Court was subsequently directed to urge upon M. de San Miguel alter that Minister's determination. He "listened to them with the "greatest attention, but declared his conviction

\* February 4th.

“ that it would be much easier to overturn the  
 “ whole constitutional system, and to re-establish  
 “ absolute despotism, than to concede even the  
 “ most insignificant of the points which had been  
 “ suggested as most likely to conciliate.” The  
 consequence of this resolution on the part of the  
 Ministers was, that they began to take the steps  
 necessary for the removal of the seat of Govern-  
 ment whenever the invasion should actually  
 occur.

The Cortes granted them the requisite power.  
 The King, however, was violently opposed to  
 quitting Madrid, and, it seems, had “ an intention  
 “ of requesting the Council of State to choose a  
 “ new Ministry selected out of their own body.  
 “ The Ministers, alarmed, obtained from the  
 “ Cortes the repeal of the decree authorizing  
 “ the employment of Counsellors of State, with  
 “ the exception of those already employed.”  
 This device “ effectually put an end to the pro-  
 “ posed administration.” But this intention was  
 not the only proof that His Majesty gave of his  
 dislike to leave his capital.

On the occasion of his signing the speech by  
 which the Extraordinary Cortes were to be  
 closed, at which his Ministers were present, on  
 an allusion being made to his removal, he  
 started up in the most violent manner, declared  
 his intention not to stir, called his Ministers by

names not often found in Royal mouths, ordered them from his presence, and in so doing exclaimed that they would quickly see whether he had courage or not, exemplifying his meaning by an allusion too gross to repeat. The Ministers retired, but returned at midnight, with a view of tendering their Resignations. His Majesty, however, was not to be seen. The Cortes were closed the next morning in the usual form, after which the Ministers gave in their Resignations in writing. The next day all was agitation in Madrid, and towards the evening of the succeeding day crowds of some hundreds assembled, uttering the most seditious cries against the King and Royal Family; they proceeded to the palace, but finding a company of militia, at the gates, determined to resist their entry, they adjourned to the municipality, where Riégo and others addressed them from balconies, exhorting them to have patience, and that His Majesty should be solicited to re-appoint the discarded Ministers. These scenes continued till past twelve at night, when the intelligence was announced that the King had been pleased to re-appoint the same Ministers, *ad interim*.

It was after the re-appointment of the Ministry that the King \* sent for Sir William à Court to

\* His Majesty was sitting up in his bed, with a beard of some days' growth, and was wrapped in a not very clean bed-gown.

complain of the insults that he had received, and of his being forced to take back the very Ministers who wished to remove him from Madrid against his will. Sir William à Court of course lamented the insults to which he had been exposed; and as His Majesty laid great stress upon the words "against his will," Sir William asked him whether he wished them to be reported to his Government. The King answered, "*Undoubtedly.*" Little more passed at the interview. It was evident that the object of the King in sending for Sir William was merely that he should hear those words.

The sudden boldness exhibited by Ferdinand to his Ministers in the language which he held to them, naturally gave rise to the idea that His Majesty would not have risked such a proceeding, had he not felt confident of support. There can be no doubt that there was at that time a project on foot for bringing about a counter-revolution; a project, to be traced to French intrigues; it however failed, and with it the evanescent courage of Ferdinand. When, therefore, a few days after, the subject of the removal was again brought forward by the Ministers to the King, his manner and language were more moderate. To create delay, His Majesty declared that he would not decide upon the question without the advice of his Council

of State. This very much dissatisfied the Minister of the Interior, who, in consequence, gave in his resignation. The Council of State advised His Majesty to have every thing in readiness for a removal, though it saw no reason why it should be immediate; they advised, also, that the resignation of the Minister of the Interior ought to be accepted. As soon as it was accepted, all the other Ministers tendered theirs: they were not immediately accepted, as great difficulty was experienced in finding persons who would consent to succeed them; at last, however, a new Administration was named, of which M. Flores Estrada was Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Don Antonio del Moral, of the Interior. The character of the newly named Ministry did not, however, increase the probability of any concessions being made. But all those that were named did not accept, and Don Antonio del Moral positively declined. The new Ministry being thus in abeyance, the Ex-Ministers transacted the publick business in the Cortes, and \* were called upon by that body to report the latest news from the Frontier. On M. de San Miguel stating that in a fortnight there would be 80,000 Frenchmen between the Garonne and the Pyrenees, it was moved that the Ministers should in twenty-four hours take the

\* March 2d.

pleasure of the King both as to the place and day for the removal of the Government. The King finding that any further opposition to his removal would probably be ineffectual, named Seville as the place to which he wished to go. The day on which the King made this decision, the new Ministers, Flores Estrada and the others, having received (as it was supposed) an intimation from the Cortes that they would not be supported, refused to retain their offices; and as the King's decree, accepting the resignations of M. de San Miguel and his friends, stated that "he should only do so after they had delivered their respective reports to the Cortes;" and as the Cortes declined to receive them till after the adjournment to Seville, the San Miguel Administration was once more in temporary possession of the Government.

The Ministers and Cortes now \* became more pressing for the removal of themselves and the King, but His Majesty's physicians reported him to be ill. On the 12th the Ministers laid before the Cortes the report of the physicians, which stated that they could not be answerable for the effects which a journey might have upon the King in the then state of his health. The Report was referred to a Committee, who recommended that His Majesty should be invited

\* March 7th.

to fix any day before the 18th for his departure. A Deputation was immediately appointed to submit the invitation to the King, who received them graciously, and declared that he should be ready to set out on the 17th, if the Cortes desired it, but that he wished to delay his departure till the 20th; and upon the Minister Gasco declaring, that, if any unforeseen accident should occur, which should render a more immediate departure necessary, His Majesty would be ready to set out, the Cortes acceded to his proposal. No such accident occurred, and the King, therefore, did not leave Madrid till the morning of the 20th of March; very few people assembled to witness his departure, and a sort of dull indifference seemed to be the general feeling. Those Members of the Diplomatick body that still remained, were invited to go with the King.

The Cortes closed on the 23d, and nearly the whole of the Members set out for Seville on the same day. The British Minister left Madrid on the 25th, according to his instructions, to follow the King, "unless His Majesty's removal should be accompanied by circumstances of violence, such as to mark a determined reluctance on the part of the King, and a manifest *duresse* on his person."



The Duke d'Angoulême left Paris for the army on the 17th of March, and on the 6th of April, as Prince Generalissimo, crossed the Rubicon by making with his army the Passage of the Bidassoa.

## CHAP. VI.

DOMESTICK AFFAIRS. — PARTIAL CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATION. — MR. CANNING'S RETIREMENT FROM LIVERPOOL. — DEBATES IN PARLIAMENT ON VERONA NEGOTIATIONS. — AFFAIRS OF IRELAND. — CATHOLICK QUESTION.

THE domestick occurrences from the time when Mr. Canning accepted office, to the period of the entrance of the French into Spain — with the exception of the changes in the Administration, his retirement from Liverpool, and the debates in Parliament, — are not of sufficient importance to require here to be noticed.

It was very shortly after Mr. Canning took office, that negotiations were set on foot to bring about those changes. Of the negotiations

by which they were effected, it is not intended to give a detailed history : such a history would indeed shew, that the task of reconciling the conflicting interests of individuals in London, required no less skill and delicacy in its management, than the more important task of settling the Affairs of Nations at Verona, and might consequently be amusing ; but it would be neither fair to the parties concerned, nor useful to the reader. Suffice it, therefore, to say, that it was finally settled that Mr. Vansittart, under the title of Lord Bexley, should become Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster ; that Mr. Robinson should succeed him as Chancellor of the Exchequer ; that Mr. Huskisson should be President of the Board of Trade, and Treasurer of the Navy ; and Mr. Arbuthnot should succeed Mr. Huskisson, as First Commissioner of Woods and Forests.

Lord Amherst was appointed Governor-General of India, in lieu of Mr. Canning ; and Lord Londonderry, having resigned the Embassy at Vienna, was succeeded by Sir Henry Wellesley, the brother of the Duke of Wellington.

By the acceptance of the seals of the Foreign Office, Mr. Canning vacated his seat for Liverpool. A short time before the meeting of Parliament, he decided that he would not again offer himself as a candidate for that place. It was not, however, without "the deepest re-

“gret” that he came to this decision; but “four months’ experience of the occupations of his office, forced upon him the reluctant conviction, that he would no longer be able to give to the important duties of a representative of that great town, that degree of attention which would satisfy the just claims of its inhabitants, and his own conscientious estimate of them.”

The severance of a connection, which during the preceding ten years of his life had been, in his opinion, “the single compensation for all the vexation and annoyance” which, during that ten years, he had experienced, must necessarily have been to him a very painful incident. For he could not but have witnessed with regret the post of Foreign Secretary occupied by a Minister, who, while he reaped the harvest, the seed of which Mr. Canning had sown, was so unskilful in the performance of the task, that, in the very act of securing, he lost more than half the produce.

It was Mr. Canning who, when Foreign Secretary in 1808, “discharged the glorious duty of recognising without delay the rights of the Spanish Nation, and of at once adopting that gallant people into the closest amity with England;” — it was Mr. Canning who discerned the great military talents of Sir Arthur Wellesley, and insisted upon their Employment in the Pe-

insula ; — it was Mr. Canning who foretold the final triumph of the cause, at a time when it was apparently desperate. But it was Lord Castlereagh who bore away the reflected glories of Salamanca and Vittoria, and threw away at Vienna their advantages.

It could not but have been a mortification to Mr. Canning, not only as a Statesman, but as a true lover of his Country, to see others spoiling his own work : and this mortification must have been embittered by the reflection, that in 1812 he rejected the offer to join the Administration, by which he would have been placed in the very situation, which would have enabled him to do all the good which he saw was capable of being done. The loss of this opportunity, “ at a time “ when office would have been dearer to him “ than at any other period of his political career ; “ when he would have given ” (to use his own strong expression) “ ten years of life for two “ of office,” could not have been otherwise to him than a source of extreme disappointment. Calumniated upon system by a faction ; who saw in him the grand obstacle to the success of its designs against the Constitution, every action of his life, during these ten years, had been misrepresented with the most unwearied malignity. The object sought was to diminish the weight of his opinion, by degrading, in general estimation, the purity and integrity of his character.

While, therefore, he had all the worry and anxiety ever attendant upon publick life, he had none of those rewards, by which its cares are sweetened, with the exception of the treatment which he experienced at Liverpool, which (as he himself has said) was his only "consolation." When his connection began with that place, he certainly had many friends there; but, perhaps, a nearly equal number of opponents. When his connection ceased with it, his friends had been confirmed in their attachment, and, it is no exaggeration to say, that, the enmity of his bitterest opponents had been converted, in all cases, into respect, and in many, into the warmth of friendship. In retiring, therefore, from a place thus endeared to him by the kindness towards him of its inhabitants—a kindness enhanced by the publick spirit in which it originated—it was no small satisfaction to have, in Mr. Huskisson, a successor well qualified to discharge the important duties of its representation.

Parliament met on the 4th of February. The Speech from the Throne was not calculated to excite controversy, by the manner in which it dealt with the topics on which it touched.

All that it said with regard to the state of affairs, between France and Spain, was, that "the King's efforts had been unremittingly exerted to preserve the peace of Europe; that "His Majesty declined being a party to any

“ proceedings, at Verona, which could be deemed  
 “ an interference with the internal concerns of  
 “ Spain on the part of Foreign Powers; and  
 “ that His Majesty continued to use his most  
 “ anxious endeavours and good offices to allay  
 “ the irritation between the French and Spanish  
 “ Governments; and to arrest, if possible, the  
 “ calamity of war between France and Spain.”

It then expressed a confident hope that peace would be preserved in the East of Europe; announced the engagements entered into by Spain to give satisfactory reparation for the depredations committed by Spaniards on British commerce; stated the exertions of the Government at Verona for the more effectual suppression of the Slave Trade; promised a reduction of taxes; recommended the adoption of certain measures respecting Ireland; and, while it lamented the continuance of Agricultural distress, expressed a hope that the “increased prosperity of the other interests of the country would contribute to the gradual improvement of that great interest, which was the most important of them all.”

In the House of Lords, the Address was moved by the Earl of Morley. The remarks of the speakers, with the exception of Lord Stanhope, were almost exclusively directed to the subject of the war which seemed impending between France and Spain.

The conduct of the French Government towards Spain was severely animadverted upon by Lord Lansdowne ; and the speech of Lord Liverpool plainly indicated, that, if the members of the Government abstained, from an open condemnation of the invasion, which France projected on the Peninsula, such an abstinence was to be ascribed, not to their entertaining feelings of less decided disapprobation of that invasion than those avowed by the Opposition, but to the necessity which Ministers are under of measuring each expression which they may employ, and adapting it exactly to the purpose which it is intended to answer. In the present instance, the hopes of the Government, of still being able to preserve peace, were not extinguished ; and one word of vehement reprobation or menace, on the part of the First Minister, might have made it a point of honour with the French Ministers, from which they could not have swerved, to have persevered in what they had begun.

The Address would have been carried unanimously, had not Lord Stanhope moved an amendment, relating to the Agricultural Distress ; a subject which was of that extensive and complicated nature, that it was only fit to be debated upon an evening, expressly set apart for the purpose. This appeared to be the general feeling of the House ; since only two Peers,



besides the noble mover, supported the amendment. The proceedings in the House of Commons were marked by the most vehement expressions of disgust at the conduct of France and the Allies. Mr. Brougham pronounced a tremendous philippick against their present designs, and former conduct. Excelling, as that learned gentleman's oratory does, in bitterness of sarcasm, and severity of attack, he seems on this occasion to have outdone all his former efforts of a similar kind. His words inspired in the breasts of his hearers the same indignation with which his own was evidently animated, and the House resounded with cheers at every pause, whilst he was dragging each separate Sovereign of the Allies before the tribunal of a free and popular assembly, to answer for their attempts to crush by mere physical force the just liberties of the world.

Mr. Peel, who, with the exception of Mr. Wynne, was the only Cabinet Minister present, the others having vacated their seats by the acceptance of office, confined himself, in replying to Mr. Brougham, to a brief explanation of the principles by which the Government had been guided: and the House, after a speech from Sir James Mackintosh, and another from Mr. Denman, in the same strain as Mr. Brougham's, carried unanimously the original address.

The following day, February 5th, when the

Report was brought up, after a few observations from Sir Robert Wilson, it was received, and the Address ordered to be presented in the usual manner.

Since both Lord Liverpool and Mr. Peel, in the course of their speeches, had declared that the Government still cherished hopes of being able to preserve peace, between France and Spain, the subject of the dispute between these two Powers was not again mooted in either House of Parliament, till three weeks from the day on which the Session opened ; and then Lord Lansdowne contented himself with simply enquiring, whether the Ministers still thought that any reasonable expectation existed that peace might yet be preserved in " Western Europe ? " Lord Liverpool, without saying whether the hopes that he had entertained, on the first day of the Session, were increased, or diminished, declared, that any further discussion, at that period, was even more to be deprecated than it was on the former occasion. Lord Lansdowne then asked whether any engagement had been entered into by this country, as to any part she might take, supposing war should actually break out between France and Spain : to which question Lord Liverpool replied, in the negative.

On the same day that this conversation took place in the House of Lords, the subject was incidentally introduced into the other House of

Parliament, on a petition being presented by Sir Robert Wilson from his Southwark Constituents for the repeal of the Foreign Enlistment Bill. Sir Robert took the opportunity of complimenting Mr. Canning, by "congratulating the house, and the country, upon the favourable aspect of its foreign policy."

Mr. Hobhouse followed, and "thanked the Ministers for the prudence they had hitherto displayed, and praised them for the course which thus far they had pursued."

"I wish, however," added the Honourable Gentleman, "to be understood as speaking of the present, and not of the late Ministry; for if the same language had been held, at Troppau and Laybach, which I believe to have been held at Verona, we should not now be placed in our present difficulties."

There can be no reason to doubt, that both Sir Robert and Mr. Hobhouse only spoke the genuine sentiments of their hearts, when they thus expressed themselves in terms of approbation at the dawn of liberal principles, which they thought they perceived in the language and policy of Mr. Canning, and were totally devoid of any sinister intentions; but it is not less true, that, compliments paid to Mr. Canning at the expense of a former Government, which was composed, with the exception of the change between himself and Lord Castlereagh, of nearly

the same individuals who formed the constituent parts of the present one, must inevitably have had the effect, had he consented to receive them, of breeding jealousy, if not disunion, between himself and his colleagues. He therefore at once declared, that “ he rejected all praise, which was “ bestowed upon the Government as then formed, “ and which was given to it at the expense of “ those by whom it was formerly composed. “ He was compelled in mere justice to say, that “ upon his entering into the office which he had “ the honour then to fill, he found the principles on which the Government was acting reduced to writing ; and this State paper formed, “ what he might be allowed to call, the political “ creed of the Ministers. *Upon the execution* “ of the principles there laid down, and upon “ that alone, was founded any claim that he “ might have to credit from the House.”

Now the State paper to which Mr. Canning here refers is the State paper, which has before been mentioned, as put forth by the Government in May 1820, just one month before Mr. Canning ceased to take any part in the deliberations of the Cabinet : for the principles laid down in that paper, as has been before observed, he held himself to be responsible ; and it is very remarkable, that all the merit that he here claims is for his *bonâ fide* execution of them.

No sooner had this declaration escaped Mr.

Canning's lips than it was variously interpreted, according as it suited the convenience of the different parties who expounded it. By those who disliked Mr. Canning, because he was the Enemy of Reform, it was said that he was in heart a friend to the Holy Alliance, and was basely walking in the footsteps of Lord Castlereagh. By those who did not like Mr. Canning much better, because he was the friend of liberal principles, but were still conscious of the popularity which the Government had acquired by the way in which the foreign policy of the country had been directed, it was said, that Mr. Canning, indeed, deserved praise; but that he only deserved it, because he had skilfully filled up the outlines of a plan, which the genius of Castlereagh had sketched.

These conflicting interpretations of what Mr. Canning said, compelled him to take the earliest opportunity of explaining his meaning. "It was not," he observed, "with the intention of separating himself from those who preceded him in office, nor with the desire of claiming to himself any merit which belonged to them, that he felt himself called upon to repeat what he had stated on a former day, and what had been much misunderstood,—narrowed by some, and extended by others,—that, applicable to the considerations on which the Congress was to be employed, he had found in the records

“ of his office (and it was also in the records of  
 “ the country) a state paper, laying down the  
 “ principle of non-interference, with all the qua-  
 “ lifications properly belonging to it. When,  
 “ therefore, with whatever degree of courtesy,  
 “ it had been ascribed to him that he had ap-  
 “ plied new principles to a new case, he had  
 “ thought it but just to remind the House of a  
 “ fact, of which indeed it was already in pos-  
 “ session. The principle of non-interference  
 “ with the independence of foreign States was  
 “ laid down in the document to which he al-  
 “ luded, as broadly, clearly, and definitively as  
 “ it was possible for any Statesman to wish to  
 “ lay it down.”

The fond pertinacity with which Mr. Canning  
 here appeals to the document in question, is  
 certainly enough to create a suspicion that he  
 felt conscious of having had, at least, some share  
 in its composition ; and it would certainly appear,  
 to those who are at all conversant with Mr.  
 Canning's style of writing, that several of the  
 sentences in that paper afford the strongest  
 internal evidence that he, and no other, was  
 their author.

Moreover, it should be observed that he does  
 not describe the principles by which he professes  
 himself to have been guided, as laid down by  
 Lord Castlereagh, but as “ laid down in a docu-  
 “ ment which he found in his office ;” which

document was put forth at a time when he himself was a Member of the Government, and was, therefore, responsible for its contents.

But whether Mr. Canning was or was not the author of several passages in this paper, which was truly described in Parliament as "a very unequal production," he could have had no hesitation in avowing that the principles laid down in it, of which he entirely approved, were those to which he had adhered with the most scrupulous fidelity. For, in truth, the propounding of general principles is of very little use, unless those who propound them follow up their words by actions. It was of very small advantage to this country Lord Castle-reagh's expressing his abstract opinion, that "the notion of revising, limiting, or regulating the course of the experiments, in which many States of Europe were then employed, of

\* The author of this history does not know, by means of any personal confidence from Mr. Canning, that what he here surmises is true: if he had been made the depositary of such confidence, he would hold it to be of a nature too sacred to be revealed. He has, however, reasons for thinking that parts of this paper were written by Mr. Canning; and it is singular enough, that in the only history of these transactions that he has read, he finds that the judgment of the writer of that history coincides with his own, — that the document in "question bears in its language, and even in its tone, internal evidence of not having been drawn up by Lord Londonderry himself."

“ casting anew their Governments upon the  
 “ representative system, either by foreign force,  
 “ or foreign council, was as dangerous to avow,  
 “ as impossible to execute,” — when, on the very  
 first occasion which presented itself for realizing  
 the notion, he admitted both the expediency and  
 justice of such a realization being attempted.  
 Of still less advantage was the enunciation of the  
 abstract principle, that “ the Alliance was never  
 “ intended as an union for the government of  
 “ the world, or for the superintendence of the  
 “ internal affairs of other States,” — when he  
 countenanced the assembling of its members, by  
 sending British Ministers to be present at their  
 meeting, when that assembling was for the  
 avowed purpose, not of exercising even a moderate  
 superintendence over the internal affairs,  
 but of overthrowing by force of arms the  
 established Government of an independent  
 State.

The merit, therefore, which attaches to the  
 mode of conducting our Foreign policy at Verona,  
 is not to be traced in the discovery of any  
 “ new principles” of conduct, but in the fair  
 execution of those which were already professed,  
 and in Mr. Canning’s marking his firm determination  
 to act up to them both in spirit and in letter.

After Lord Lansdowne’s questions respecting  
 the relations between France and Spain, and the



discussion which arose upon the same subject on the occasion of Sir Robert Wilson's presentation of the petition for the repeal of the Foreign Enlistment Bill (both of which occurred on the 24th of February); nothing further was said respecting Foreign Affairs in either House, with the exception of a few unimportant observations of Sir Francis Burdett's on the third reading of the Mutiny Bill, until Lord John Russell (on 25th of March) enquired, "Whether there were any stipulations, in any Treaties, by which this Country guaranteed the Throne of France to Louis XVIII. and his successors?" Mr. Canning, in answer, acknowledged that there was a Treaty in existence, by which, to the best of his belief, we were bound to exclude the family of Buonaparte from the Throne of France; and added, that there was also another, by which, if a rebellion should break out in France, we were bound to meet and concert with our Allies, on the means necessary to be taken.

On the following day Lord Liverpool gave notice, that on the 14th of April he should lay upon the table of the House some papers relating to the Negotiations, which had recently taken place, with reference to the Affairs of France and Spain; and, at the same time, he announced his intention of making a statement, containing the general outline of the policy pur-

sued by the Government with regard to those Negotiations.

Lord Grey objected to the course proposed, on the ground that the statement made by Lord Liverpool would go forth to the publick, and make an impression, which there would be no immediate opportunity for other Noble Lords to controvert, from their not being acquainted with the contents of the papers. Lord Grey further expressed his hope, that we were not fettered by any secret engagements to support France in her conduct towards Spain.

Lord Liverpool, in answer, having first defended the course which he intended to pursue against Lord Grey's objections, declared, that the only engagement by which we were bound, that had not been made publick, was "of a completely negative nature, and related to the exclusion of the family of Buonaparte from the Throne of France." After a few more words, from Lord Grey, to which Lord Liverpool replied, the conversation dropped.

Two days after this, on the motion in the House of Commons for a fortnight's adjournment, during Easter, Lord Archibald Hamilton, having made some general observations condemnatory of Mr. Canning's supposed policy at Verona, moved that the House should only adjourn for one week. Mr. Macdonald followed in the same strain; and Mr. Warre enquired,

whether we had not, in effect, guaranteed the Throne of France to the Bourbons? To this question Mr. Canning replied by reading to the House the different Articles of the Treaties which related to the subject; which only served to confirm the correctness of his former statement of the nature of the existing Treaties. He then announced his intention, after the adjournment, of giving to the House some account of the late Negotiations. The original motion for a fortnight's adjournment was then carried.

The day that the House met after the adjournment, Colonel Davies urged the same objections that Lord Grey had urged in the House of Lords, against a statement being made by Mr. Canning explanatory of his conduct, at the same time that he brought down the papers; since the Opposition, from being ignorant of the contents of those documents, would not be able immediately to reply to it. Mr. Canning, however, persisted in thinking that the course which he proposed to pursue would be most fair, and most convenient, as Parliament would be better able to understand, and, by consequence, to form a correct judgment of the conduct of the Government, if the papers should be accompanied by an explanation, than if they were presented without comments.

On the 14th of April, therefore, in con-

formity with the notices which they had respectively given, Lord Liverpool in the House of Lords, and Mr. Canning in the House of Commons, severally made a statement illustrating the contents of the papers respecting the war between France and Spain, which papers were then laid upon the tables of the two Houses.

The substance of the historical part of both speeches has been given in the preceding chapters of this work, in which the account of the transactions at Verona, and of those which subsequently took place on this subject, is circumstantially narrated. The observations of the two Ministers were chiefly intended to place in chronological order the facts of the case as they became known in England, that by showing the exact aspects under which they were presented to the British Government, at the different periods when it was called upon to take its decisions respecting them, the motives by which those decisions were regulated might be clearly understood.

There was no intention on the part of the Government to call upon Parliament for any expression of its opinion upon the papers: the object of their communication not being to obtain approbation, but to make manifest to the world, that if the negotiations in which the Ministers had been engaged had failed to pre-

serve peace, the failure was not to be attributed to any want of skill or exertions on the part of the negotiators; and, above all, that in every step that had been taken, the honour of the country had been maintained, and its best interests consulted.

Lord Liverpool, in his speech, explained and justified what had been done, more at length than Mr. Canring: but since, in both houses, there was subsequently brought forward a motion of censure upon the Government, when an opportunity was afforded to both of them for making a full exposition of their conduct, and for replying to the objections which were made to it, it will be better to defer for the present noticing what fell from them on these points, that their accusation and their defence may be brought at one view under the consideration of the reader.

The debate, however, was not permitted to close in either house, until Lord Grey in the one, and Mr. Brougham in the other, had expressed their dissent from the principles avowed by the Ministers, and condemned (as far as they were then able to understand it) the whole tenour of their conduct.

Before this motion of censure was made, another motion, bearing upon the contest then going on between France and Spain, was brought forward in the House of Commons by Lord

Althorpe, for the repeal of the Foreign Enlistment Act. Although his Lordship contented himself with arguing the fitness of the repeal upon the abstract merits of the question, maintaining, at the same time, that if the act were repealed, it would be no infraction of the neutral course advisedly adopted by the Government, of which course he did not hesitate to approve, yet it was evident that the attempt to annul the provisions of this act was made at this particular moment on account of the assistance that would thus be given to the Spanish cause. Lord Folkstone, indeed, in seconding the motion, condemned in vehement terms the original resolution of the Government to maintain neutrality; and likewise reprobated, in still more vehement language, the papers relating to the negotiations, which the Ministers had laid before Parliament. The speech of the noble Lord was singularly violent, and pointedly so towards Mr. Canning.

Of the supporters of the motion, the advocates for neutrality about equalled in number the advocates for war; and the Government having decided upon a neutral course, Mr. Canning, as a member of the Government, could only argue the question upon the assumption that the country was to pursue a system of neutrality. The policy of that system he was ready to justify and explain, whenever it should be regularly

made the subject of debate ; but it was not fitting that a point, on the decision of which the whole question as to the conduct of the Government depended, should be settled by a mere incidental discussion. Assuming, therefore, that a neutral course was the one which Great Britain was to pursue, any other, he said, but an honest, real, *bonâ fide*, neutrality would be unworthy the dignity of the country ; “ for a neutrality under “ the mask of non-interference with one party, “ whilst a covert support was given to the other, “ would be palpably mean and unjust : that it “ would inevitably ruin the character for honour “ and integrity of any nation that should adopt it ; “ but more particularly would it be disgraceful “ to Great Britain, who, when she was a belli- “ gerent, had taught other Powers the nature “ of a strict neutrality, though, generally “ speaking, she had found them most reluctant “ scholars :” it therefore especially became her to adopt the same course which she had recommended, and enforced, on former occasions, upon others. As a proof of the disposition of the Government so to act, it had, according to the wish of the Spanish Government, taken off the prohibition for the export of arms to Spain, instead of extending the prohibition to France. The latter course would, “ *in appearance*, have “ been fair, but the vicinity of the Belgick “ ports to France would have rendered the

“prohibition of direct exportation to France  
 “entirely nugatory.” The prohibition had  
 originally been enforced at the request of Spain,  
 both against Her, and Her colonies; and it was  
 now, by the wish of Spain, that it was entirely  
 removed, “to produce an equality between  
 “France and Spain, — not in words, but in fact.”  
 On the same principle, “the question of the  
 “repeal of the Foreign Enlistment Act ought  
 “to be decided,” and if it were so decided, it  
 could not but be negatived; for “it was well  
 “known that, in the then disposition of the  
 “country, the repeal of that Act would be a  
 “repeal only in words as respecting France, but  
 “a repeal in fact as respecting Spain. It was  
 “quite certain that such a repeal would occasion  
 “an inequality of operation,” and would there-  
 fore be an insidious way of injuring France  
 totally unworthy of a great nation. “I will not  
 “now,” said Mr. Canning, in conclusion, “argue  
 “in favour of a system of neutrality; but it  
 “being declared that we intend to remain  
 “neutral, I call upon the House to abide by  
 “that declaration so long as it shall remain  
 “unaltered. When war comes, if come it must,  
 “let us enter into it with all the spirit and  
 “energy which becomes us as a great and in-  
 “dependent people. That period I do not wish  
 “to anticipate, still less to hasten. If a war  
 “must come, however, let it come in the shape



“ of satisfaction to be demanded for injuries,  
 “ of rights to be asserted, of interests to be pro-  
 “ tected, of treaties to be fulfilled ; but, in God’s  
 “ name, let it not come on in the paltry, petti-  
 “ fogging way of fitting out ships to cruize for  
 “ gain. At all events, let the country disdain  
 “ to be sneaked into a war. Let us abide  
 “ strictly by our neutrality as long as we mean  
 “ to adhere to it ; and by so doing we shall, in  
 “ the event of any necessity for abandoning  
 “ that system, be the better able to enter with  
 “ effect upon any other course which the in-  
 “ terest of the country may require.”

The question was rejected by a majority of 106, — the ayes being, 110 ; the noes, 216.

In the House of Lords, upon a motion made  
 by Lord King for an account of the extra-  
 ordinary expenses of foreign Missions between  
 the 1st of September and the 31st of December  
 1822, a discussion arose relative to the papers  
 which had been laid upon the table. All which  
 was then said, was repeated on the occasion of  
 the House being called upon by Lord Ellen-  
 borough to express an opinion upon the merits  
 of those documents, with the exception, how-  
 ever, of what related to the point — “ whether  
 “ any treaty existed, or any stipulation in any  
 “ treaty, between this country and France, or  
 “ any other country, by which it was provided

“ that the kingdoms of France and Spain should  
 “ never be united under one head.”

The question was asked by Lord Holland; and Lord Liverpool, in answering it, “ had no  
 “ hesitation in saying that, looking at all the  
 “ Treaties, they amounted to an obligation that  
 “ the Crowns of France and Spain should not  
 “ be united.” In consequence of what passed in the House of Lords on this evening, on the occasion of some additional papers being presented to Parliament upon the subject of the negotiations, there was included amongst them a “ separate article of a Treaty with Spain, in  
 “ which the King of Spain engaged not to  
 “ enter into any treaty, or engagement with  
 “ France, of the nature of that known, under the  
 “ denomination of the Family Compact; nor  
 “ any other which might affect the independ-  
 “ ence of Spain, or might be injurious to the  
 “ interests of His Britannick Majesty.” This article was contained in a Treaty between the Kings of England, and Spain, signed in 1814, and, “ in compliance with the wishes of the  
 “ French Government, was not laid before Par-  
 “ liament,” with the other Treaties made at the same time.

When all hope of the preservation of peace between France and Spain was abandoned by Mr. Canning, he sent this article to Sir Charles Stuart, saying, that “ he (Mr. Canning) had no

“doubt that M. de Chateaubriand would at once  
 “acknowledge that such an act of compliance,  
 “with the wishes of the French Government  
 “enhanced the King’s claim upon France to  
 “respect the solemn obligation of this Article.”

“M. de Chateaubriand,” in answer, “assured  
 “Sir Charles Stuart, that the French Govern-  
 “ment were quite resolved to respect its obliga-  
 “tions.”

The day following that on which the debate on Lord Ellenborough’s motion took place, Lord Holland again reverted to this question. It appears that his Lordship was not entirely satisfied with the efficacy of the Article to prevent Ferdinand of Spain, from succeeding to the Throne of France; and that the words, “known under  
 “the denomination of the Family Compact,” were strangely indefinite, and might be evaded with facility. Lord Liverpool said, that the meaning “of the term ‘*Family Compact*,’ was  
 “perfectly understood; that the bearing of all  
 “the Treaties was, that the Crowns of France  
 “and Spain could not be united; that the  
 “Treaties were recognised by other Powers,  
 “and assented to by the Legislatures of France  
 “and Spain at the time when they were made.”

After this, the subject was not again mentioned in Parliament.

On the 24th of April Lord Ellenborough moved an Address to the King, censuring the

conduct of the Ministers in the late negotiations ; and, on the 28th of the same month, Mr. Macdonald moved a somewhat similar address in the House of Commons. The debates to which these motions gave rise lasted one night in the Upper, and three in the Lower House of Parliament. As was naturally to be expected in so lengthened a discussion, the arguments which were used by one speaker were frequently repeated by others ; varied, indeed, sometimes in their form and language, but still essentially the same. The best way, therefore, of taking a connected view of these debates is, by arranging, in some kind of order, the objections raised against the policy which the Government pursued, and the answers that were given to those objections, assigning each separate argument, whether for, or against, to its owners, whenever they happen not to be too numerous to render any thing like an exclusive appropriation of it unattainable.

The question, which, in the very outset of the proceedings, the Ministers had to decide was, whether in case Spain was attacked, either by the Alliance collectively, or by France singly, this country ought to go to war, in the first place, in defence of the Spanish Constitution ; or, in the second, to prevent the invasion of the Peninsula by a French force.

The Government decided, that neither the

honour nor the interests of this country prescribed her hostile interference to prevent the one, or to support the other.

If this decision were wrong, it follows, as a necessary consequence, that all the steps which the Government took, which were influenced by it, were likewise wrong from being founded on error.

Before, therefore, the wisdom or the fitness of the part which England acted in the late negotiations can be established, this preliminary question must be set at rest. But it is remarkable that, of all those who, in no measured terms, condemned Mr. Canning's policy, there were only two, Lord Grey and Mr. Hobhouse, who boldly and fairly stated their opinion, that Ministers were deserving of blame for having in the outset adopted a pacifick resolution.

Mr. Hobhouse's reasons for thinking that England ought to have gone to war in defence of the Spanish Constitution are comprised in a very narrow compass:—“The honour of “England,” said he, “was involved in the preservation of the free institutions of the Continent; and in the event of any war against “the Tyrant Kings of Europe, the British “*people* would undoubtedly be happy to support it.”

Now, a war of this nature, viz. a war of the People against Kings, might be a war, which it

was both wise and consistent for Mr. Hobhouse to recommend; but since it is quite certain that no Ministers of this country, even if they had themselves been disposed to act upon the recommendation, could have persuaded Parliament to commence a war, justified by such a principle, or undertaken for such a purpose, it is idle to discuss the wisdom of a line of policy which, supposing that they had the will, they had not the power to pursue.

Lord Grey's reasons for desiring war were of a more substantial nature than were those of Mr. Hobhouse; and since there is little doubt that, had the Ministers been of the same opinion with his Lordship, they could, without difficulty, have carried the country with them, the impracticability of acting up to Lord Grey's advice cannot be brought forward as a proof of its impolicy. Its soundness, therefore, must be ascertained by comparing the arguments by which he supported his opinion with those by which it was opposed.

It is admitted on all hands, that no war, of which the justice is not demonstrable, ought to be undertaken by a civilized Nation. Lord Grey, therefore, began by contending that "the principle asserted by the French Government of dictating to another, and an independent Nation, a change in its constitution, was most odious and most unjust;" and that, therefore,

if England should think it proper to take up arms in defence of Spain, she would have an undeniable right to do so. This proposition is certainly true, but it does not, therefore, follow that war ought to have been undertaken; for, as Lord Grey went on to observe, the justice of a war is not all that ought to be required to induce the Ministers of a country to plunge into hostilities; they ought likewise to be satisfied that the interests of their country demand the adoption of so fearful an alternative. "But," continued Lord Grey, "our best interests are at stake. If two of the most remote countries in the world had been about to go to war, under the same circumstances, it might have been said that our interests were not involved" in their disputes; "but here the danger is at our very doors. The invading Power is France—the Power invaded Spain; and we ought not to stand by and see this latter country overrun;" and for this reason—that the Balance of Power would be destroyed by the ascendancy "of France in the Councils of Spain, and the military occupation of the Spanish territory and resources,—a danger against which this country ought to be on its guard, and against which this country had been on its guard at every former period of its history." "It might sound," added he, "very plausible to say, 'that Spain was not so great as she

“ ‘had been in times gone-by.’ She might, in-  
 “ deed, have lost her Colonies, but she possessed  
 “ a vast extent of means of restoring her navy;  
 “ and when once France had the custody of  
 “ Spain, she would be backed by the Holy Al-  
 “ liance in her efforts to destroy the liberties of  
 “ mankind. The monarchical principle once  
 “ established, and liberty driven from the Con-  
 “ tinent, it was not to be supposed, either that  
 “ she would remain unassailed in this her last  
 “ asylum; or that the Despots of Europe would  
 “ tolerate the bitter reproaches of the free press  
 “ of England, or the unshackled discussions of  
 “ her independent Parliament.” “ United with  
 “ Spain, Great Britain would have possessed  
 “ the best security against the ambition and  
 “ power of France.” As it was, the late “ mea-  
 “ sures of the British Government had not made  
 “ peace secure; and war, if it did come, would  
 “ be more dangerous, than, if undertaken at an  
 “ earlier, and more favourable period.”

These were all the reasons adduced by Lord  
 Grey to fortify his opinion, that if France was  
 determined to invade Spain, England ought to  
 have opposed herself by hostile interference to  
 the invasion.

The last of these arguments was pushed fur-  
 ther by the members of the party, with whom  
 Lord Grey acted, than it appears that he himself  
 thought proper to push it; for they pointed out,



both why peace was not secure, and why, if war should come, it would be more dangerous afterwards than it would be at that moment. They said, — and, it must be allowed that, the fear was not unreasonable — that France, once in possession of Spain, would in all probability attack Portugal, as that country had likewise a Constitution; that then, in fulfilment of our Treaties, we should be compelled to fly to the support of Portugal; and that we should do so at a much greater disadvantage, when France was in possession of Spain, than before She acquired that possession. Those, however, it should be remembered, who thus argued, did not recommend war; but since this reasoning touching Portugal undoubtedly afforded strong grounds for hostilities, and since Lord Grey evidently implied that what he dreaded was an invasion of Portugal by France, although he did not say so, in weighing the value of the respective arguments for and against, this one, in its full extent, must in fairness be thrown into the hostile scale.

The correctness of Lord Grey's views, as far as they go, with one exception, must be fully admitted. There can be no doubt that the military occupation of Spain by France disturbed the Balance of Power; that it was a disparagement to Great Britain; that it was a danger, against which She had strenuously contended at every former period of her History; and that

there was a considerable chance that an attack on Portugal might ultimately compel England to mingle in the fray, when, France being in possession of Spain, a war to defend Portugal would be, *quoad* the defence of Portugal, much more dangerous and difficult. But the remaining incentive to hostilities, viz. the fear that, liberty once driven from the Continent, England, her last asylum, would not long remain unassailed, was one of which Mr. Canning did not feel the strength, because he did not participate in the alarm. He felt too conscious of the "tremendous power"\* which the existing state of the world, divided as its inhabitants were by two contending principles, gave to England, to dread the consequences of any attack which the Sovereigns of Continental Europe might dare to make upon her liberties. He well knew that the mere intimation of our consciousness that we possessed that power, would be amply sufficient to keep those Potentates in salutary awe: a power, however, the use of which was carefully to be avoided except in the extreme case of the existence of our national independence, or liberty being endangered, but which was still a power which would be as surely successful in protecting England, against the efforts of any combination whatever to destroy her freedom, as

Vide Mr. Canning's Speech on sending Troops to Portugal, 1826.

hitherto it has proved all-efficacious in preventing those efforts being made. Time, indeed, has shown that Mr. Canning was right in refusing to reckon amongst the reasons for hostility this fear of a future attack being made upon our independence. This alleged cause for war being then struck out of the catalogue, all the others must be acknowledged. They therefore must be combated, not (as the one just discussed) by denying their existence, but by showing others of a more cogent nature, which prescribed a different, and more pacifick policy.

It must be confessed, that there was a time in the course of these transactions, when that extreme sensitiveness for the honour of his country, which always strongly influenced Mr. Canning's conduct, made him hesitate whether the honour of England would not make it her interest to oppose by arms the invasion of Spain by the French; and this, not for the sake of supporting the Spanish Constitution, but, on the very principle on which Lord Grey recommended it, to preserve the Balance of Power, in deference to the antient policy of the country, which was always opposed to so intimate a connection, between the Courts of Paris and Madrid.

But, before Mr. Canning again committed the country to a war, it became him, on whom the responsibility would mainly fall, to weigh well whether the object to be gained was worth the

fearful sacrifice which the means employed would necessitate.

The occupation of Spain by France would undoubtedly disturb the Balance of Power, most surely in itself an evil; but would it be disturbed in that same degree as in olden time, when our ancestors were so justly jealous of the junction of those two Powers? Was not the proportionate weight of Spain reduced in the scale by the introduction of other Powers, which had not then sufficiently emerged from barbarism to have possessed any material influence over the fate of the civilized nations of Europe? Was not, too, the actual weight of Spain reduced in the Balance, by her exhaustion from recent struggles,—by the general disorganization which a vicious Government had produced in every thing of which the union constitutes the strength of a nation,—by the political discussions which divided her population,—and, above all, by the one half of her Empire being severed from the other? It appears, therefore, that, however essential to British interests the preservation of the Balance of Power might be, the derangement of that Balance, which under the then circumstances would be produced by the conquest of Spain by France, could not be of near the same extent, as it would have been in former times.

True it was, that, in 1808, England had (Mr.

Canning recommending it) opposed Napoleon's attempt to place the Spanish crown on his brother's head, but under circumstances essentially different. Peace or war was not then the question; that point had years before been decided in favour of the latter: the question for consideration then was, — how, being at war, we could wage it most advantageously; and to this Mr. Canning's answer was, that the Peninsula then afforded "the theatre of exertion, in which "we could contend with the greatest prospect "of success." Then, indeed, Spain, if not as powerful as ever, still had not lost her Colonies, and did not present the picture of national degradation that she did in 1822. France, too, in 1808, when all the Great Powers of Europe were at the beck of her Ruler, was not the same France that in 1822 acknowledged Louis as her master. The union, consequently, of these two Powers in 1808, was far more formidable than in 1822, when, in comparison, both of them had shrunk so considerably in their dimensions.

It would have been, therefore, surely most impolitical to have neglected the consideration of the altered state of Europe, and to have plunged into a war to prevent Spain from being overrun by France, with no better defence for it than that our ancestors, in former times, had done so wisely; and that We, in more recent

times, had neither commenced nor continued a war, but merely directed our efforts, which at any rate were to be made in some direction, to the accomplishment of a similar object.

The proposition,\* then, that the magnitude of the danger to England from an union between France and Spain in 1822 was *very* considerably less than what it was in the times of Louis XIV. and Napoleon, may be considered as proved. There remains, however, to be considered, 1st, Whether the Balance of Power, which would most assuredly be deranged to some extent by the success of the French invasion, would be deranged to so great an extent as would make it advisable for England to interfere by war to prevent that success? 2dly, Whether war was likely to effect the purpose for which it would be undertaken? and, 3dly, Whether, if France should eventually attack Portugal, war would be more dangerous and injurious to England than it would be before the French army should cross the Pyrenees?

There are two considerations which suggest a negative answer to the first of these questions: 1st, That the occupation of Spain, with her resources in the state of exhaustion in which they then were, and with one half of her population arrayed against the other, was more likely to be, upon the whole, a source of weakness than of strength to France; and, 2dly, That the con-

ferring of a recognised independent political existence, on the Spanish American Colonies, would be far more than a counterpoise to England, for those advantages, which France might gain, from the possession of the Mother Country.

With regard to the second, it may be that if we had "gone to war directly, unsparingly, and "vigorously against France, in behalf of Spain, "in the way in which alone Spain could derive "any essential benefit from our co-operation, "by joining with her heart and hand," and by sending an Army to her succour, we might have driven back the French from the Peninsula; but since a naval, not a military, war was recommended by Lord Grey, it would seem tolerably clear that, although we might have "been "scouring the French coasts for prizes, and "capturing Martinico for our indemnification," the only thing that we should certainly not have accomplished was, the prevention of the conquest of Spain by France; while, unless we had sent an army to defend Portugal, we should have withdrawn the only motive which was likely to operate with France to leave that country unmolested. But, in truth, a maritime war is, a description of war, to which it is not in our power to adhere, so long as we are bound by Treaty to defend both Portugal, and the Netherlands against foreign aggression; and

had the other Great Continental Powers joined France, as they most assuredly would, if Great Britain had gone to war with France, it can hardly be supposed that the territories of both those States would have been scrupulously respected. At any moment, therefore, we might have been forced into military operations.

With regard to the third, Mr. Canning said that "the strength of Great Britain had very lately been strained to the utmost; that her means were at that precise stage of recovery which made it most desirable that the progress of that recovery should not be interrupted; and that her resources, then in a course of rapid reproduction, would by any sudden check be thrown into disorder more deep and difficult of cure." That, therefore, if the country "must be driven into a war sooner or later, it had better be later;" and that the delay would be more advantageous to England, than would be, considering the state of the Spanish nation, the increase of advantage arising to France from having achieved the conquest of the Peninsula. It was for these reasons, therefore, that Mr. Canning raised his voice for peace! And if these reasons alone are fairly weighed in the scale with those for war, their preponderance can hardly be doubted. But granting that they only balance each other, still all those produced in favour of war are ex-



hausted, while others in favour of peace, the soundness of which experience has proved, remain in reserve to place the wisdom of a pacifick policy beyond the reach of controversy. Foremost of these is the consideration of what were likely to be the results of war, in the hypothesis of its being a land war, and of its being carried on with success. One result very probably might have been the prevention of the occupation of Spain by France; but was it not also more than probable, had the French army been driven back, defeated, through the Pyrenees, that it would have produced a convulsion in France, from which England, in her turn, would have suffered? For although, if England were committed in hostilities with France, upon "an external question, She might not have thought herself justified, and indubitably would not have been disposed, to employ against her Foe the arms of internal Revolution," yet Spain would have been both justified in using, and willing to use, such weapons "in a struggle begun avowedly from an enmity to her internal institutions." Was it therefore for England, who had so long fought against Jacobins and Anarchists, to be instrumental in placing in the hands of Spain the means of inflicting so dreadful a retaliation? Was it for England "to be a party to a war in which, if Spain should be victorious, the consequences to France, and,

“ through France, to Europe,” might be such as would make the effects of victory more baneful than defeat?

To preserve unbroken the peace of the world was Mr. Canning’s anxious aim ; that failing, to re-establish it as quickly as possible was the next object of his solicitude : and would not the appearance of England in the arena of hostilities, have diminished in a tenfold degree the chances of a speedy restoration of tranquillity ? The war, as it was, was only between France and Spain ; but if England had been joined with Spain, might not France have been joined by other Powers, until at last the whole of Europe was involved in the dispute ? “ The duration and disasters of a war depend in a great degree upon the multitude or fewness of its elements ; the accession, therefore, of any new party or parties to the war would have only served to complicate it, and to add to the difficulties of pacification.” Besides, there was a very considerable chance that England might altogether avoid engaging in a war ; and the fact that the whole of Spain has been evacuated, without the intervention of hostilities, proves that that chance was of no inconsiderable value.

But supposing England had resolved to fight, would she, as in 1808, have taken up the gauntlet in behalf of an united Nation ? On

the contrary, so divided were the Spanish people, that "she would not have had to strike in the cause of Spain alone, but, fighting in Spanish ranks, she would have had to point her bayonets against Spanish bosoms." Surely then, if the war was to be half civil in its character, it was a war in which it became additionally expedient for England not to engage.

Other reasons in defence of a neutral policy might yet be adduced, if those already stated were not more than sufficient for their purpose. One, however, is too important to be omitted, as well on account of its own intrinsic importance, as because it records a fact which has not yet been mentioned.

The war with Spain was exceedingly unpopular with the great majority of the French People. As long as France and Spain were the only parties to it, so long its unpopularity was likely to continue. But, most assuredly, if England had engaged in it, she would have become a principal; the inevitable consequence of which would have been, that those who hated the war, because they hated its injustice, would have lost sight of its origin, and fought with all their hearts when they had their antient Rival for their Antagonist.

With all these arguments in favour of neutrality forcing themselves upon the attention of the Government, it may safely be affirmed, that

no Minister could have acted in defiance of them. The position, therefore, that the Government, in deciding on neutrality, acted wisely, may be considered as established.

Always, therefore, bearing in mind this most important decision, the propriety of which only two individuals disputed, the next points to be considered are, whether the negotiations were conducted in the way best adapted to their end — the preservation of the peace of the world ; and whether the tone assumed in them was such as to uphold the honour and the dignity of Great Britain.

In examining this part of the subject, it must not be forgotten, that those who object to a line of conduct which has failed in securing its object, possess a great advantage over those whose task it is to justify that conduct.

To the objectors it is always open to say, that a different course would have been successful ; and, as the opportunity for trying it has gone by, the assertion never can be demonstrably disproved, while the failure of that which has been pursued being certain, the supposition of a favourable issue is precluded.

The complaint against the way in which the Ministers conducted the negotiations, is contained in the last sentence of each of the two addresses that were respectively moved by Lord Ellenborough and Mr. Macdonald.

Lord Ellenborough said, that "a more prompt, "decisive, and unequivocal policy would, under "all the circumstances of France and of Europe, "have afforded the best hopes of preventing the "commencement of a war."

Mr. Macdonald said, "that a tone of more "dignified remonstrance would have been better "calculated to preserve the peace of the Continent."

Now the expressions, "prompt, decisive, and "unequivocal policy," and "tone of more "dignified remonstrance," — if they did not mean war, which those who used them declared that they did not, must mean that the effect of a menace of war ought to have been tried, or else the point at issue degenerates into a mere verbal controversy.

If they mean a menace of war, then, unless England were prepared to follow up her menace, in case it were disregarded, no course can possibly be conceived less "decisive, unequivocal," or "dignified." A menace not intended to be executed, as Mr. Canning, with just notions of true dignity, observed, "was an engine which "Great Britain ought never to condescend to "employ."

The question, therefore, of menace was the same as that of war, and was one which involved exactly the same prudential considerations. The same reasoning, therefore, which disposes of the

question of war, disposes likewise of the question of menace.

All, then, that remains under this head to be shown, in order to complete the triumph of Mr. Canning, is, 1st, That the language in which he expressed his sentiments was exactly suited to the occasion ; — (for he is not accused of having approved any offensive principle put forth by France or the Allies ; but simply of not having condemned it in words sufficiently energetick ; ) — 2dly, That no measures were taken which were not befitting the character of the country, and no measures were omitted to be taken, which ought to have been taken to prevent the violation of the general tranquillity.

As to the 1st, — the not using language sufficiently forcible, — that certainly was a fault, if fault it were, of which Mr. Canning's accusers took special care that they would not be guilty. “ It was necessary to delay the expression of an opinion until one had recovered from the impression of one's first feelings on reading matters from which one's heart so totally revolted — feelings of surprise and disgust which could never be entirely removed,” said one member. “ The country had been degraded by the way in which the negotiations had been conducted,” said another. “ The documents submitted to Parliament did not discover a single proof of that open, manly, and inde-

“ pendent feeling which it became this country  
 “ to express,” said a third ; and a fourth, while  
 he “ could not repress his feelings of shame  
 “ and indignation at reading the papers, enter-  
 “ tained nothing but scorn and contempt for  
 “ their authors.”

But, now, let us enquire, what gave rise to  
 these ebullitions of virtuous indignation. Let  
 us ascertain whether any sentiments had been  
 put forth by Mr. Canning which were unworthy  
 of him ; and let us try if we cannot find some  
 expressions, here, and there, that would have  
 done honour to any British Statesman.

The first sentence, which was the most ve-  
 hemently condemned and ridiculed, and which  
 comes the first in order in the correspondence,  
 is where Mr. Canning says, that if there “ be a  
 “ determined project to interfere, either by force  
 “ or by menace, in the present struggle in Spain,  
 “ so convinced is His Majesty’s Government of  
 “ the uselessness and danger of any such inter-  
 “ ference ; so objectionable does it appear to  
 “ them in principle, and so utterly impracticable  
 “ in execution, that when the necessity arises,  
 “ or, I would rather say, when the opportunity  
 “ offers, I am to instruct your Grace, at once,  
 “ frankly and peremptorily, to declare, that to  
 “ any such interference, come what may, His  
 “ Majesty will not be a party.”

Lord Ellenborough led the attack in the

House of Lords on this much-misconstrued sentence; pretending to expect after the words "come what may" some tremendous denunciation, he put on an air of surprise when he repeated the conclusion, that "His Majesty would not be a party to any such interference." His example was followed in the House of Commons by three Honourable Members, who repeated the same remark, in the same way.

Mr. Canning, in defence of his sentence, observed, "that if this declaration was applicable to the whole course of the negotiations, there might be something in the remark," thus four times repeated; but that the meaning of the declaration would appear in a very different light, when it was considered that it was an answer to the question, "What part England would take if, in the Congress at Verona, a determination should be avowed by the Allies to interfere forcibly in the affairs of Spain?" The answer given plainly meant, "that the King would not concur in such a determination, even though a difference with his Allies, and a dissolution of the Alliance, should be a consequence of his refusal." The answer "had its effect. The Congress separated without determining in favour of any joint operation of a hostile character against Spain." The answer, therefore, "gained the object that was sought by it, and there was no necessity for



“ a greater flourish, or a greater pomp of words.”

To the effect which it produced M. de Montmorency and Mr. Hobhouse bore testimony. The former officially declared, that he should have been completely successful “ at Verona, “ if England had thought herself at liberty to “ concur in his efforts ; ” and the latter admitted, that it was “ generally understood at “ Verona ” (where he happened to be) “ that no “ joint declaration of war was to be made, and “ that the instructions given to the King’s Plenipotentiary were the cause that there was “ none.”

It may be matter of regret that the foreign policy of the country had previously been so conducted, as to have induced the Allied Sovereigns to entertain the idea, which their question implies, that England would join them in an attack on Spain ; but that could not be attributed as a fault to Mr. Canning, since at the time the question was put, he was not ten days old in office. When asked, however, all that could be discreetly done, was, to return a decided, but not offensive, reply.

Although the reply produced its effect, there were, as has been before stated, despatches sent to the Representatives of the Allied Sovereigns at Madrid, accompanied with orders to quit that capital if the recommendations contained in

those despatches, to alter and amend the Constitution, were not listened to by the Spanish Ministers. But what right had England to set Herself up, as a judge, to decide whether the Monarchs of independent States should or should not continue diplomattick relations with any particular Court? The Duke of Wellington, as the Plenipotentiary of a Power in alliance with these Monarchs, certainly did tender his urgent advice, that the despatches in question should not be forwarded to their destination ; but had he turned advice into menace, or rebuke, as it was invariably argued by his opponents that he ought to have done, would it not have been setting the example of acting up to the very principle of interference in the internal concerns of independent States, which his country was condemning ; since the decision respecting diplomattick intercourse between two countries is entirely a matter of internal regulation ?

Against hostile interference on the part of the Allies with Spain, England had a right to remonstrate, and, if She chose, to menace. But, without doing either the one or the other, by the firm, yet temperate expression of Her sentiments, She prevented that interference from being attempted.

Against the withdrawal of the Ministers of the Allied Courts from Madrid, She had no right either to menace, or remonstrate : She had

no right even to advise, except in the character of a friend; and, therefore, it particularly became Her to take care that Her language was not unnecessarily violent, lest, if it were so, she should lose the privilege of advising; which, although the advice was not taken, was still the only resource that was left to avert what was considered as an evil.

Against the promise of support to France given by the Allies on three hypothetical cases, 1st, Of an attack made by Spain on France; 2dly, Of any outrage on the person of the King, or Royal Family; 3dly, Of any attempt to change the dynasty of that Kingdom, England certainly had no right to protest. In refusing to join in that hypothetical promise, she certainly did all that she could have been expected to do, while she did not hesitate to express her entire conviction that there was no prospect of the occurrence of any one of those cases.

If, therefore, the language held by the British Plenipotentiary at Verona was neither weaker nor stronger than it ought to have been, since it had produced exactly the effect which was intended by it, when, it may be asked, ought stronger language to have been used? Surely it would have been most unwise to have taken a different tone, at Paris, immediately after the Congress at Verona, when it was evident that the Head of the French Government was doing

all in his power to preserve peace, and before any fresh circumstance had taken place to alter the character of the business. After, however, the King of France's Speech reached England, which Speech — from the principle put forth in it, that all Constitutions, to be legitimate, must emanate from the spontaneous will of the Sovereign — placed the question in a new point of view, Mr. Canning forthwith acquainted the French Ministers, that, in the opinion of the English Government, “the Spanish Government could not be expected to subscribe to such a principle; that it was one which no British Statesman could defend or uphold; and that it struck at the root of the British Constitution.” They were told, moreover, that, if it were not disavowed, the good offices of Great Britain to bring about an arrangement, for which the French Ministers still professed themselves most desirous, would be forthwith withdrawn.

It is singular enough that those who were indignant at this language, because it was “too civil,” “were driven,” in the very address in which they condemned it, “in order to deliver themselves with the utmost force, to borrow the very words used by Mr. Canning, ‘*strike at the root of the British Constitution*,’ to exemplify the omission which they imputed to him.”

But the fairest way of judging of the language, is, not by the selection of isolated sentences, but by considering whether, as a whole, it was not well adapted to its end : that end was to prevent war with Spain altogether, whether by the Allies in a body, or by France alone.

To attain these objects, there were only two courses which afforded any prospect of success : The first, to threaten war, and to be ready to follow up that threat. The second, to act the part of Mediator, and to show that Great Britain, in recommending peace, had really at heart the true interests of all parties.

To have blustered without threatening—to have threatened without being ready to execute the threat—would not only have been ridiculous, but would have destroyed the last chance of Peace, by taking away from the Councils of England the friendliness of their character, by the means of which alone she could retain the position of a Mediator.

Before the French Army entered Spain, Mr. Canning, in a despatch in which he took a summary of all that had passed, distinctly told the French Government where the forbearance of England would cease.

An attack on Portugal—a design of a permanent military occupation of Spain on the part of France—or an attempt to bring under her dominion any of the Spanish American Colonies,

either by conquest or cession, were perhaps the only contingencies, the occurrence of which "could by possibility bring Great Britain into collision with France." Mr. Canning merely observed, that the English Government was "satisfied" that France would take care that these contingencies should not occur; but "it is obvious that under that suavity of expression was implied an 'or,' which imported 'another' (and a hostile) 'alternative.'"

So much for the language. Before, however, other points in the management of the negotiations, which were vehemently condemned by some parties, are touched upon, it may not be amiss to mention two curious facts, which only serve to exemplify the zealous anxiety, with which Mr. Canning laboured in the cause of Peace.

When M. de Chateaubriand was in England as Ambassador from France, he had frequent intercourse with Mr. Canning. Both parties were mutually impressed with each other's talents. When Mr. Canning received the Seals of office, a complimentary letter was addressed to him by M. de Chateaubriand. When the latter was appointed to the Foreign Office in France, Mr. Canning took the opportunity, in reciprocating the compliment, to point out the extreme dangers to which the Throne of the Bourbons would be exposed in case either of a

defeat of the French Armies, or of a protracted resistance to them. The letter was answered, and the correspondence continued for some short time; and from the way in which M. de Chateaubriand expressed himself respecting these communications, Mr. Canning was not without hopes that they might have produced the effect which he intended. But it was not long before it was evident, that M. de Chateaubriand had resolved to float with the stream, and to execute the will of the predominating party in the French Chambers.

Mr. Canning made a similar effort to endeavour to induce the King of France's Brother, Monsieur, with whom he had had the honour of having been personally intimate, when His Royal Highness was in England, to give the sanction of his countenance to the Peace Party. The letter was graciously received, but it appears produced no salutary effects on the mind of the Prince.

But to return — There was no charge which was brought in the course of the debate with greater frequency against Mr. Canning and the Government, than that they had allowed themselves to be duped by the professions of the French Ministers. There can be no doubt, that, if it could be substantiated that Mr. Canning, by believing in professions which were made for the purpose of deceiving him, had acted in a way which he

would not have done had he not believed in those professions, that he would have shown a want of sagacity, and that he might have been fairly designated, as a dupe ; but if, so far from altering his conduct on account of them, he acted in precisely the same manner, as he would have done, had he been certain that the professions were false, it is quite clear that he was not betrayed into any unwise step from an erroneous estimate of the intentions of others.

The truth was, that while the Councils of the French Ministers were perpetually vacillating, Mr. Canning continued to pursue "the even tenour of his way." Sometimes he had one opinion, sometimes another, according as circumstances arose, as to what course the French Government might ultimately adopt. For eight and forty hours after M. de Montmorency's resignation, Mr. Canning thought that a change from war to peace had taken place in the French Councils : a little time showed that it was only a change in the character of the question, from European to French ; but no measure was taken in consequence of the first belief, which would not have been taken had the true state of the case been known in the first instance.

"That man is not a dupe who does not foresee the vacillations of others ; but he who is misled to do something, which he would not



“ otherwise have done, by false pretences put forward for the purpose of misleading him.”

Another fault that was attempted to be fastened on Mr. Canning was, that he refused the office of Mediator at Verona, and yet subsequently proposed to the French Government to undertake it; and that the rejection was an affront to which he tamely submitted. The reason for this different conduct has already been explained. The British Government had no objection to mediate between nation and nation, but would not mediate between “ a nation and an alliance, assuming to itself the character of a general superintendant over the concerns of other nations.” As to the refusal of our mediation by France, the refusal was couched in terms of courtesy; and since the offer was made for the sake, more of discharging a duty, than with any confident hope that it would be accepted, most assuredly it never would have been made, if for one instant it had been contemplated that its non-acceptance would amount to an affront to those by whom it was offered. Mr. Canning justified his conduct on this point by a quotation from a writer \*, “ whose authority was not interested, nor partial, nor special in its application — but universal, uninfluenced by the circumstances of any par-

\* Martens.

“ ticular case, and applicable to the general  
 “ concerns and dealings of mankind.” That  
 writer says, “ Mediation differs essentially from  
 “ good offices. A State may accept the latter,  
 “ at the same time that it rejects the former.”

Mr. Canning’s answer to the complaint, that  
 Spain ought to have been invited to send a Re-  
 presentation to the Congress, must be given in  
 his own words. “ In the first place,” said he,  
 “ (so far as Great Britain was concerned,) as  
 “ we did not wish the affairs of Spain to be  
 “ brought into discussion at all, we could not  
 “ have taken, or suggested a preliminary step,  
 “ which would have seemed to recognise the  
 “ necessity of such a discussion. In the next  
 “ place, if Spain had been invited, the answer  
 “ to that invitation might have produced a con-  
 “ trary effect to that which we aimed at pro-  
 “ ducing: Spain must either have sent a ple-  
 “ nipotentiary, or have refused to do so. The  
 “ refusal would not have failed to be taken  
 “ by the Allies as a proof of the *duresse* of the  
 “ King of Spain. The sending one, if sent (as  
 “ he must have been) jointly by the King and  
 “ Cortes, would have raised the whole question  
 “ of the legitimacy of the existing Government  
 “ in Spain; and would almost to a certainty  
 “ have led to a joint declaration from the Al-  
 “ liance, such as it was our special object to  
 “ avoid.”

Another objection to Mr. Canning's conduct was, that he hinted to M. de Chateaubriand the possibility of putting an inoffensive construction on a sentence in the King of France's Speech ; a construction which, it was affirmed, that it would not bear, and which, therefore, Mr. Macdonald maintained to be unworthy of England to suggest. But surely when the French Ministers were, by their Chargé d'Affaires in London, pouring into Mr. Canning's ears the expression of their anxious desires for the preservation of peace, and explaining away the apparent meaning of different passages of the above-named document, it would not have been wise policy in Mr. Canning to have interpreted the sentence in a way, which would have necessitated the withdrawal of the interposition of the good offices of England, the last hope of peace which yet remained, especially when the sentence was capable of an inoffensive meaning, which, from the language of the French Ministers, it was clear they would be ready to adopt.

If the policy of this country had been to seek a ground of quarrel with France, then, perhaps, it might not have been wise to have volunteered the giving the French Ministers the option of making a satisfactory explanation ; but if, even had they insisted on the offensive interpretation, it was not intended to revenge it by any hostile

measures, surely the dignity of England was not compromised, by pointing out a less objectionable meaning. In an affair of honour, the very first step which is taken by the party injured by the words of another, is to call upon the offending party, either to retract or to explain his expressions; to which, if the party so called upon consent, it is considered the most complete reparation that can be given for the insult. How, therefore, that course which, in the case of an individual, is the most honourable to pursue, is, where a nation is concerned, degrading, remains unexplained by those who condemned Mr. Canning's conduct in a matter so strictly analogous.

But the point on which the "fiercest battle" was fought against Mr. Canning, was "the suggestion of the Duke of Wellington to Spain, made through Lord Fitzroy Somerset, as to the expediency of her modifying her Constitution, which suggestion was made with Mr. Canning's sanction. The motives which dictated this mission have already been recorded. The objection made to it was, that "it required every thing of Spain, and nothing of France, and that we advised Spain to sacrifice her honour." But was this fact? Had Spain consented to take the advice of England, England would have had good right to expect that France, at her instance, would have withdrawn the Army of Observation. The Spanish Revolution

disquieted France. The French Army of Observation irritated Spain. A modification of the one, and the dispersion of the other, were the mutual points of concession.

It must be allowed, that “ the propriety of  
 “ maintaining the Army of Observation depended  
 “ wholly upon the truth of the allegations on  
 “ which France justified its continuance. The  
 “ truth of those allegations was not to be taken  
 “ for granted. But it was not the business of  
 “ the British Government to go into a trial, and  
 “ examine evidence to ascertain the foundation  
 “ of the conflicting allegations on either side.  
 “ It was clear, that nothing but some modifi-  
 “ cation of the Spanish Constitution would avert  
 “ the calamity of war ; and, in applying the  
 “ means in our hands to that object, (an object  
 “ interesting not to Spain only, but to England,)  
 “ it was not our business to take up the cause of  
 “ either party, and to state it with the zeal and  
 “ with the aggravation of an advocate, but  
 “ rather to endeavour to reduce the demands of  
 “ each within such limits as might afford a  
 “ reasonable hope of mutual conciliation.

“ The duty of ‘ a Mediator,’ says Vattel, ‘ is  
 “ ‘ to favour well-founded claims, and to effect  
 “ ‘ the restoration to each party of what belongs  
 “ ‘ to him ; but he ought not scrupulously to  
 “ ‘ insist on rigid justice. He is a conciliator,  
 “ ‘ not a judge : his business is to procure

“ ‘ Peace ; and he ought to induce him who has  
 “ ‘ right on his side to relax something of his  
 “ ‘ pretensions, if necessary, with a view to so  
 “ ‘ great a blessing.’ ”

It, therefore, certainly was the duty of England to urge Spain to make any sacrifice, short of national honour and independence, to preserve peace. The modifications were not asked to be conceded to France, threatening war ; but were to have been adopted in consequence of the friendly advice of England to enable her more effectually to mediate with France ; but then England threatened nothing, whether her advice were accepted or rejected.

These were all the objections of any importance that were urged against Mr. Canning's policy, by the Members of either House of Parliament. For the sake of brevity and perspicuity, they have been placed, with their answers, in some kind of order, without regard to the periods in the Debate, at which they were severally brought forward. • •

In the House of Commons, the Speakers against the Government attacked Mr. Canning more fiercely than those of the House of Lords ; and so, likewise, the part which the Duke of Wellington took in these transactions was more vehemently censured by their Lordships, than it was by the lower House of Parliament. Lord Ellenborough led the attack upon the Duke. He

'insinuated that the Duke had, like another Hannibal, been bred in camps, and "knew but "little of civil institutions," and charged him, without ceremony, "of having shown as much "ignorance of the Spanish Constitution, as he "had done of the Constitution of his own "Country."

Lord King and Lord Grey likewise commented upon the Duke's conduct with asperity. The Duke defended himself with ability, and was ably supported by Lords Liverpool and Harrowby, both in defence of his Grace's conduct, and that of the Government of which they were Members. An Amendment, moved by Lord Granville, laudatory of the course pursued by the Government in the negotiations, was carried by a majority of 94. In the House of Commons, Mr. Stuart Wortley brought forward a similar Amendment, and Mr. Peel and Mr. Robinson made very powerful speeches in reply to Sir Francis Burdett and Sir James Mackintosh. It was not until late on the third night\* of the Debate, that Mr. Canning rose to defend himself. The substance of the arguments contained in his Speech has been employed in refuting the objections of his opponents. To go over them again would be unnecessary repetition. The irresistible effect

\* April 28. 1823.

of his address is shown by the fact, that those who had condemned him in the most unmeasured language, and who had, during three long nights, lectured him in the most unsparing manner, were most anxious that no division should take place; and, when compelled to divide, by Mr. Canning's refusing to allow the original Motion to be withdrawn, and the Amendment to stand in its place, they voted for Mr. Wortley's Amendment, in preference to Mr. Macdonald's Motion, so that the minority consisted of a few Members on both sides, who, owing to the lobby being full, were compelled to remain in the body of the House.

The Opposition had the advantage of the last word, since Mr. Brougham spoke immediately after Mr. Canning, and concluded the debate.

The part of Mr. Canning's speech which perhaps more than any other was conducive to these results, was that in which he declared "his immediate object at Verona" to have been the preventing any war "with Spain, growing out of an assumed jurisdiction of the Congress, and the keeping within bounds that *areopagitical* spirit, which," said Mr. Canning, again referring to that same memorandum issued by the British Cabinet in May 1820, "is described as beyond the sphere of the original conception, and understood principles of the Alliance."



The expression of a fixed intention to repress the designs of the Holy Alliance by a Minister of the Crown, and that Minister, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was so new to the House of Commons, that it fell like musick on the ears of those, who had long dreaded the influence of that Alliance, especially since it was evident that that which England had done at Verona did, *bonâ fide*, counteract the designs of the Continental Sovereigns. The strong language in which Mr. Canning reprobated the conduct of France, furnished, also, additional proof of his sincerity, and tended considerably to increase the confidence which the country seemed inclined to repose in him.

The conduct, indeed, of France was, with one single exception, universally condemned; the Duke of Buckingham being the only individual in either House of Parliament who ventured, to avow his wish that the French might triumph in their unjust aggression.

Notwithstanding the decided approbation expressed by the two Houses of Parliament of the Policy pursued by the Government respecting France and Spain, the subject was soon afterwards again brought forward in each.

On the 12th of May, Lord Grey moved for the production of some more papers, which he considered necessary for the clear understanding of those which had already been produced.

This motion was apparently made chiefly for the purpose of refuting a charge of inconsistency which Mr. Canning had urged against him in the debate on Mr. Macdonald's motion. •

The first topick on which Lord Grey touched related to the capture of a Spanish corvette in the West Indies, by a French ship, which capture, had it taken place in consequence of any orders from the French Government, would have been an act of shameless perfidy, as the orders must have been issued at the very moment when the French Government was professing to the English Ministry its anxious desire to preserve peace. The circumstance was explained by Lord Liverpool, who said, that the French Government had issued no orders whatever to make captures, and that the Spanish corvette made the attack on the French ship; and that in consequence of this attack, the French ship captured the corvette, as it was justified in doing.

The second topick related to the supposed approbation of the Duc d'Angoulême to a proclamation that had been issued by the provisional Junta of Spain; which proclamation declared all acts done by the Constitutional Government null and void; and would consequently have rendered null the engagements entered into by the Spanish Government with Great Britain to indemnify her for the piracies

and outrages on her trade that had been committed in the West Indies. To this Lord Liverpool replied, that the proclamation had been completely disavowed by the French Government.

The third topick "related to the state in which France stood with respect to the Sovereigns assembled at Verona; and went to inquire, whether France was acting with the assurance of their assistance and support, or whether France was engaged in a strictly national war, to which those great Powers were no parties."

Lord Grey having stated this, his third topick, before he proceeded to its discussion, turned aside to defend himself against the before-mentioned charge of inconsistency, which had been brought against him by Mr. Canning.

It has been already stated that Lord Grey and Mr. Hobhouse were the only two advocates for war with France on account of her invasion of Spain. Lord Grey urged it because he considered it both just, and expedient. Mr. Hobhouse urged it, because he considered it to be both just, and generous. In answering Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Canning took the liberty of reminding him "of three circumstances calculated to qualify a little his feelings of enthusiasm, and to suggest lessons of caution." The first of these was the condition of this country in 1808;

the second the condition of Spain in the same year, as compared with their respective conditions in 1823; and the third was "the manner in which the enterprise begun in 1808 was viewed by certain parties in this country."

Mr. Canning having contrasted the difference in the position of this country and Spain at the two periods in question; and in so doing, having shown how much more imperiously Great Britain was called upon, for the sake of her interests, to aid Spain in 1808, than she was in 1823, in elucidation of the "manner in which the proposition of succour was received," notwithstanding that our interests were then, as he argued, more nearly concerned, proceeded to quote a part of a speech of Lord Grey's upon that business delivered in 1810, — "In order," said his Lordship, "to warrant England in embarking in a military co-operation with Spain, something more was necessary, than to show that the cause was just. It was not enough that the attack by France upon the Spanish nation was unprincipled, perfidious, and cruel; that the resistance of Spain was dictated by every principle, and sanctioned by every motive honourable to human nature; that it made every English heart burn with a holy zeal to lend its assistance against the oppression; — there were other considerations of a less brilliant and enthusiastick, but not less

" necessary and commanding nature, which  
 " should have preceded the determination of  
 " putting to hazard the most valuable interests  
 " of the country. It is not with nations as with  
 " individuals. Those heroick virtues which shed  
 " a lustre upon individual man, must, in their  
 " application to the conduct of nations, be  
 " chastened by reflections of a more cautious,  
 " and calculating cast. That generous mag-  
 " nanimity and high-minded disinterestedness,  
 " proud distinctions of national virtue (and  
 " happy were the people whom they charac-  
 " terise) which, when exercised at the risk of  
 " every personal interest, in the prospect of every  
 " danger, and the sacrifice even of life itself,  
 " justly immortalise the hero, cannot, and ought  
 " not, to be considered justifiable motives of  
 " political action ; because nations cannot afford  
 " to be chivalrous, and romantick." Mr. Can-  
 " ning having finished the quotation, left it with  
 " this single observation, " History is philosophy,  
 " teaching by example ; and the words of the  
 " wise are treasured for ages that are to come."

The argument in which Mr. Canning intro-  
 duced this quotation was to the following effect :  
 If, in the midst of all the enthusiasm with which  
 the breast of every lover of his country must be  
 inspired, at the spectacle of a great nation ris-  
 ing almost to a man against its invaders, and  
 struggling for its freedom if, at the very mo-

ment of the occurrence of such heart-stirring events, there were monitors, whose feelings of indignation at the aggressors, and admiration of the resisters, were tempered by those of a more prudent, and calculating, and perhaps wiser nature,—if, precepts of caution could be given under such circumstances, and if they deserved to be attended to, how *much more* were such precepts likely to be enforced, how *much more* were they worthy of attention, where the apathy of one part of the Spanish People, and the hatred of the other to the Constitutional cause, prevented any enthusiasm being felt in its favour—and when, as Mr. Canning maintained, the calls of self-interest upon Great Britain to mingle in the fray were nothing like so imperious or decisive.

The point of this argument then was, that the same principles which induced Lord Grey to condemn the policy of sending our armies to the Peninsula in 1810, ought, if consistently applied, to induce him to oppose the affording warlike succours to that country in 1823; especially, when, in 1810, the Spaniards were united, in 1823 they were divided amongst themselves, and when success at the former period would have been salvation to this country, while, at the latter, victory would have been a very dubious advantage.

Lord Grey defended himself from this charge

of inconsistency, by saying, that from the first moment that the Spaniards resisted Napoleon's "attack he had wished them success ; " that, there was no assistance likely to contribute to that success within the means of the " Country to afford that he was not desirous of " giving them ; that the very speech," which had been quoted as a proof of his inconsistency, " showed that his feeling as to the attack was " the same in 1810 as it was in 1823 ; " that, in 1810, he had condemned the Government for having improvidently sent Armies to Spain which had been defeated, and, therefore, objected to the sending an additional Army to share a similar fate ; that although that Army had been, contrary to his expectations, triumphant, it had been so in consequence of circumstances arising which no man could have foreseen ; that " he admitted in 1810 he had been mistaken, " but that, at subsequent periods, he had qualified, and explained, and even changed his " sentiments ; " that, therefore, the bringing such a charge against him was not only most " extraordinary, but most unfair."

But Mr. Canning did not charge Lord Grey with not entertaining the same feelings of indignation at Napoleon's aggression that he professed against that of the Bourbons ; neither did he deny that Lord Grey was willing to give to Spain, all the assistance that the means of the

Country would afford, any more than that Lord Grey had, when he found himself mistaken, "qualified, and even changed his sentiments."

But what Mr. Canning did mean to say was, that Lord Grey condemned the policy pursued by the Government towards Spain; that his opinion of "the means that the country would afford," were very different from those entertained by the Government; and that, by the same principles by which he condemned the support given to Spain in 1810, he ought consistently to approve the not giving similar support in 1823.

When, therefore, it is considered that Mr. Canning's attack on Lord Grey was not unprovoked; that it was made in self-defence, in answer to a severe condemnation of his conduct by Lord Grey; it will surely be thought that the epithet "most unfair" is not the most appropriate that could have been selected.

Lord Grey having disposed of this question, returned to the third ostensible object of his speech, which was directed to proving that "the Allies had agreed with France, that if she engaged in a war they would support her with their Armies."

The reasons which Lord Grey gave for thinking that such an agreement had been entered into, were certainly sufficient to justify him for entertaining this opinion; but since it is now



perfectly well known, that the Allies were under no positive engagement "to France to support Her with their armies," although, had She failed, they might have been very ready to do so, it is needless to examine reasons, which, however apparently convincing at the time, are now known to have been fallacious.

Lord Grey concluded, by moving for the production of papers.

After a short discussion, in which three noble Lords declared for war, two of whom had not done so in the first debate, the motion was negatived without a division.

A few days before the Prorogation, Colonel Palmer made a speech on the subject of Foreign Policy. The motion with which he concluded was simply seconded by Mr. Hume, and no other member on either side made any observation.

This attempt was the last that was made that session to condemn a line of policy which cannot now be doubted to have been "consonant with the interests, and satisfactory to the feelings of the British People."

The other debates which occurred during the session produced an impression on the public mind very favourable to Mr. Canning. He seemed to have inspired his Colleagues with his own sentiments, and to have changed the tone of the Administration.

Little passed on the subject of Agricultural

Distress. On' the very first mention of it, Mr. Canning declared it to be his sincere, although reluctant conviction, that no measure of direct relief could be suggested by the Government which would produce any good effect.

There had been a moment when he had been of a different opinion, and when he had thought that the advancement of money to the landed interests might have been productive of advantage ; but reflection had convinced him that it would have been, " if practicable, mischievous " in the highest degree." His reasons for so thinking, although not then stated by him, were given in detail two years afterwards, on Captain Maberly proposing a similar plan for the relief of Ireland. • On that occasion Mr. Canning observed, " Let us consider the relation in which, " under the plan proposed, the Government " would stand to the landed interests. The " creditor would technically be the Crown. The " prerogatives of the Crown with regard to the " recovery of its debts were well known ; and " could there be any thing more inconvenient " than the relation in which the landlords who " had borrowed would stand to the Crown ? " What class of landlords would those be who " became bound to the Crown ? Why, the least " opulent or the least provident, who, without " means of their own, would be willing to be " come behind for sums to be advanced to them-

“ selves or their tenants. They, therefore, must  
 “ become debtors to the Crown, for, unfor-  
 “ tunately, there could not be a lender without  
 “ a debtor. It had been well observed by some  
 “ essayist, how remarkably the person who ad-  
 “ vanced money changed his character; that  
 “ nothing was so amiable as a lender, while  
 “ nothing was so odious as a creditor; that we  
 “ went cap in hand to a lender, admiring his  
 “ generosity and liberality, while in a year or  
 “ two, when he assumed the aspect of a cre-  
 “ ditor, we dreaded to see his face. Yet then  
 “ were the same individuals in different stages  
 “ of their progress. The Crown too must so  
 “ change its character; and unless loans were to  
 “ be a cloak for gifts, the Crown must come to  
 “ demand payment. The Prerogatives of the  
 “ Crown would be very inconvenient, not only to  
 “ the borrower, but to all the creditors of the  
 “ borrower, since it stepped in before them all.  
 “ Such a scheme, therefore, would place the  
 “ landlords in a state very inconvenient to them-  
 “ selves, very inconsistent with their independ-  
 “ ence, and very injurious, if not ruinous, to  
 “ those who were their previous creditors.”

These were the reasons which then led him  
 irresistibly to the conclusion, that no direct relief  
 could be afforded; and if by his making this  
 declaration some of the Agriculturists were dis-  
 appointed, the majority of them were not much

indisposed to admit its wisdom, in which they were the more inclined to acquiesce, from a promise, made at the same time, of a remission of taxes, as well as from the hope of more prosperous times, of which there were symptoms at the commencement of the year. Before its conclusion, the depression of the Agricultural interests had diminished to a very great extent.

The clear and candid exposition of the new Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Financial situation of the country, conferred great credit upon himself, and added to the popularity of the Administration. The publick were delighted with the novelty of hearing from the Finance Minister a statement which all parties allowed to be intelligible, and which nearly all admitted to be correct, instead of those, to which they had been so long accustomed, which to most persons were incomprehensible, and which, by those who professed to understand them, were generally maintained to be erroneous.

Shortly after Mr. Canning had taken his seat, he defended the Duke of Wellington against an attack made upon his Grace, respecting the disposal of the office of Lieutenant-General of the Ordnance.

The House of Lords this Session made some regulations respecting the more expeditious hearing of appeals, which gave considerable satisfaction to the Publick.

The account of the Debates on the subject of the Slave Population in the West Indies; on the Delays in the Court of Chancery, as well as of the Measures respecting the Silk Laws, and Relaxations of Commercial Restrictions, will be deferred till the history is given of the further proceedings on those subjects in future sessions, in order that an entire and connected view may be taken of the course which Mr. Canning pursued upon these important questions.

An attempt was made by Mr. Whitmore to obtain leave to bring in a bill to amend the Corn Laws, for the purpose of admitting Foreign Corn at all times, on payment of a duty. The Agricultural Interests were yet, however, too much depressed to allow of the success of his attempt; and his motion was rejected on a division.

Lord Archibald Hamilton brought the case of Mr. Bowring before the House. Mr. Bowring was an individual travelling in France, who was arrested by the French Government, kept in prison, and subsequently dismissed without a trial. There can be no doubt that the real cause of his detention was, his being supposed to hold sentiments unfriendly to the Bourbon Government; although the avowed pretence was, that he was illegally conveying some letters. As soon as the knowledge of this Gentleman's arrest reached Mr. Canning, he forthwith gave

directions to the British Ambassador, at Paris, jealously to watch over the case, and to take care that Mr. Bowring was treated with the most scrupulous justice, according to the French Law. It appeared that Mr. Bowring had actually, by illegally carrying letters, given ground for his arrest; and Mr. Canning thought it impossible to interfere, in any other way, than the one proposed, as he held it to be an undisputed principle, that “an individual who entered voluntarily into a foreign country, at the same time entered into a temporary and qualified allegiance to the laws of that country; that he confined himself to their observance; that he submitted to their operation; and that however unwise the system of law might be in itself, however harsh, however little congruous to his notions of civil liberty, or to his happier experience of the jurisprudence of his own country, he had still no right to complain of the operation of those laws on himself, provided that operation was not partial, but was the same as it would be in the case of a natural born subject of that state.”

All, therefore, that the British Government felt itself bound to do, in Mr. Bowring's behalf, was “to take care that the laws, not of England, but of France, were applied to his case with perfect impartiality.” Mr. Canning having assured the House that this had been most

scrupulously done, and the question being put by the Speaker, it was at once negatived.

After the Easter Holidays, Lord John Russell brought forward his annual motion for a Reform in Parliament. The discussion was enlivened by no new arguments, and the fact of all the great interests of the country, being at that time progressively improving, damped not a little the reforming spirit of the House of Commons.

With the exception of the debates relating to Ireland, and the Catholick Question, those already enumerated were all of any importance that took place during the session. "The consideration of such measures of internal regulation, as might be calculated to promote and secure the tranquillity of Ireland, and to improve the habits and condition of her people," had been recommended to Parliament in the Speech from the Throne; and in justice it must be acknowledged, that all parties seemed anxious to comply with the Royal recommendation. So willing, indeed, was the House of Commons to consider every question that related to Ireland, that night after night was consumed, in inquiring into the supposed misconduct of an Irish Judge, and a Dublin Sheriff; and the examinations were conducted with a patience and minuteness, that marked a laudable desire on the part of the House of Commons to probe every abuse, whether arising

from system, or from accident, in that part of the United Kingdom.

The proceedings on the first of these cases, originated in the Report of a Parliamentary Commission, and ended in the House declaring its opinion that it was unnecessary and inexpedient, to take any steps with reference to the conduct of Chief Baron O'Grady, the Judge accused.

The proceedings on the second case, grew out of a motion of Mr. Brownlow's, introducing a Resolution condemning the Attorney General of Ireland, Mr. Plunket, for what Mr. Brownlow termed unconstitutional proceedings.

It appeared that a set of Orangemen in Dublin had entered into a conspiracy, at least to insult, if not to assault, the Lord Lieutenant\* at the theatre. His Excellency having made himself obnoxious to the Orange faction, by a resolute determination to act with the most perfect impartiality (as far as the law allowed him) towards Catholics and Protestants.

The grand jury of Dublin ignored the bill against the conspirators, in spite of the evidence against them; and Mr. Plunket, in the exercise of the discretion with which the State and the Law entrusted him, resolved that the accused should, at any rate, be put upon their trial. He

\* Lord Wellesley.



accordingly filed an *ex-officio* information against them. Mr. Brownlow's object was to prove that this discretion was exercised in an unconstitutional way; but notwithstanding his very able and eloquent speech, he failed in establishing his charge against Mr. Plunket, and the House got rid of the motion by passing to the other orders of the day.

It was in consequence of some observations which fell from Mr. Plunket in the course of his defence, inculpating the conduct of the Sheriff of Dublin, that the House determined to investigate his conduct. Mr. Canning voted against the investigation, which he said "must terminate in one of two ways. The Sheriff might be acquitted of all blame, but then, as the House was precluded from hearing sworn evidence, he would have been accused by sworn, and acquitted by unsworn testimony; or the charge might be substantiated against him, and he must then be sent to his trial, with the House as his prosecutor, and the prejudice resulting from the weight of its authority against him." Mr. Canning, "therefore, preferred a judicial investigation."

A Parliamentary enquiry was, however, decided upon; and after many nights employed in the examination of witnesses, in the course of which the House was more than once placed in situations of considerable embarrassment, it

ceased, without the expression of an opinion either one way or the other.

Besides these discussions on Irish affairs, four other motions respecting them, which were all rejected, were brought forward in the House of Commons. One by Mr. Brougham for a Committee to enquire into the Administration of justice in Ireland; another by Mr. Hume for the abolition of the office of Lord Lieutenant; and a third by Sir Henry Parnell for an enquiry into the disturbances in Ireland; and a fourth by Mr. Hume respecting the Irish Church Establishment.

Nothing of any great importance occurred in the debates on the first three questions; and as to the questions themselves, if they were not calculated to do much good, at any rate they were not likely to be productive of mischief. Not so the one relative to the Irish Church Establishment, on which occasion Mr. Hume moved resolutions, the simple statement of which was calculated to have the very worst effects upon the settlement of the great question on which the peace of Ireland depended.

Mr. Hume's first resolution set forth, "That  
 "the property of the Church of Ireland in pos-  
 "session of the Bishops, Deans, and Chapters,  
 "was publick property at the disposal of the  
 "Legislature, for the support of Religion, and  
 "for such other purposes as Parliament in its

“wisdom might deem beneficial to the community.”

The second, “That it is expedient to enquire whether the Church Establishment was not more than commensurate to the services to be performed ; and whether a reduction of the same ought not to take place.”

Now, even if the magnitude of the Irish Church Establishment be greater than the wants of the community, intrusted to the charge of that Establishment, may require, yet the feeling was very general, that any attack upon the revenues of that Church would shake the foundations of all property in Ireland, without any corresponding good being secured to the country. The landed estates (for landed estates only, and not tithes, were included in Mr. Hume’s resolutions) which belong to the dignitaries of the Irish Church, are in the same situation as those which belong to lay proprietors, with the exception that those by whom they are possessed, do not acquire them by hereditary succession. The payment of tithes may press heavily upon the community. But, whether a landed estate belongs to a clerical proprietor, in right of his appointment by the crown, or to a lay proprietor, by right of inheritance from his fathers, must, *cæteris paribus*, as far as the community at large is concerned, be a matter of absolute indifference.

The tenure of confiscation and grant from the crown, by which the greatest portion of land in Ireland is held, is such as it was thought would be peculiarly likely to be affected by any violation of Church property ; and since it was well known that many of those who were unfriendly to emancipation, were unfriendly on the express ground of danger to the Irish Church Establishment, and danger to the proprietors of the forfeited lands, an attack upon that Establishment, previously to the question of emancipation being brought forward, was of all measures the most certain to be fatal to its success, and was, as Mr. Plunket described it, one of absolute folly, and desperation.

Very different were the two measures which were introduced by the government for ameliorating the condition of Ireland, which were justly described by one of the most patriotick and able of the Irish members, belonging to the Opposition, as “ measures of wisdom and conciliation, — the “ tendency of the one being to unite all classes “ of the community in Ireland, while the other “ would put an end to nearly all the grievous, “ and oppressive practices of the tithe system.”

The first of these measures was a law to extend to Ireland the provisions of an act passed in 1799, by which would be brought under the operation of the law any society which committed an overt act in violation of it.

The second was a law for the commutation and composition of tithes in Ireland.

Overrun as Ireland was with secret societies, any enactment placing those societies under the control of the law was sure to prove beneficial. The intention of the government, therefore, to introduce this bill, when declared on a motion of Mr. Abercrombie's relative to the orange societies in Ireland, was received with satisfaction by all sides of the house. But the plan for the commutation of tithes, of which the merit is due to Lord Wellesley, was likely to be productive, and may now indeed be said to have produced, the most advantageous consequences.

The benefit of these measures, however excellent in themselves, could not be immediately felt, and the disturbances in the southern counties of Ireland compelled Parliament again to pass the Insurrection Act.

But although much was done this session to wards ameliorating the condition of Ireland, the one great boon of emancipation, without which no extensive or permanent good could ever be effected for that divided country, was lost in the House of Commons.

Since the establishment of the Regency, it never was discussed under more unfavourable circumstances. Independently of Mr. Hume's attack on the Irish Church, the greatest pains had been taken by Mr. Canning's enemies to propagate

the opinion, that, in his speech at Liverpool, he had betrayed the Catholick cause; and consequently that it had lost its most influential, and ablest, advocate. His opponents in the House of Commons were too ready to believe this calumny against him. But not content with misconstruing his language on that occasion, some observations which fell from him on Mr. Brownlow's motion were likewise equally misunderstood, and made the plea for a most extraordinary proceeding on the part of some members of the Opposition. Sir Francis Burdett took the opportunity, afforded by the presentation of the Norfolk petition for Emancipation, to declare, that, having heard from Mr. Canning, whom Sir Francis described as the "FORMER eloquent advocate of the catholic claims, that there was "not the least chance of the question being carried in their favour," he, for one, would not consent to be a party "to the annual farce of "discussing those claims;" and, therefore, if Mr. Plunket should determine on bringing the question forward that evening, according to his notice, he (Sir Francis Burdett) should withdraw from the house.

Mr. Canning "contradicted flatly, and *in toto*, the words and the sentiments which Sir Francis had imputed to him." What he had said, was, that "he thought it hopeless in the "then state of the country and the Parliament,

“ to form an Administration, which should agree  
 “ on Emancipation, and upon all other general  
 “ measures, so as to be able to carry on the  
 “ general business of the nation. If any per-  
 “ sons said that the success of the question was  
 “ hopeless, unless it were made a Government  
 “ question, the proposition was theirs, not his;  
 “ and so far from his being of that way of think-  
 “ ing, he repeatedly said that the question would  
 “ make its way under any Government, which  
 “ did not actually unite, or openly set its coun-  
 “ tenance against it. It might, however,”  
 continued Mr. Canning, “ receive its death-  
 “ blow from the secession which had been  
 “ threatened that evening; but if it did so  
 “ fail, on the heads of the seceders alone let the  
 “ blame of its failure rest. For himself, there  
 “ was not a man in the House, let his general  
 “ opinions on politicks be hostile or favourable  
 “ to the Government, to whom, if he brought  
 “ forward this subject, either wholly, or in part,  
 “ he would not give his unqualified support.”

Mr. Tierney differed with Mr. Canning in  
 opinion as to the impossibility of forming an  
 Administration united on the question of Eman-  
 cipation; but he did not point out the indivi-  
 duals of whom it could have been composed.  
 He laid great stress on Mr. Canning's having  
 consented to join the ministry, without having  
 stipulated for concession; and maintained, that

if Mr. Canning had refused "to support the Administration, if the Administration would not support concession to the Catholics, the anti-Catholic party would have given way." A more erroneous idea can hardly be conceived. Mr. Canning had accepted an important office, to fulfil the duties of which he was about immediately to leave England. His departure could alone have been prevented by his being called upon to administer the functions of another office, still more important to his country. His power, therefore, to force the Government was more than half diminished, for he could only proffer his support, while he could not threaten his opposition.

Undoubtedly the Administration stood in need of Mr. Canning's services: and so thought its most influential members. But is it to be credited that Lord Liverpool, however much he might have felt the need of Mr. Canning's support, would have purchased mere increase of strength to his Government, at a price which he would not have paid for the preservation of its existence? Is it to be credited, that all those members of the Cabinet who refused to serve even under a Catholic Premier, would have yielded their opinions to secure Mr. Canning, when, without being required to make any such sacrifice, some of them were adverse to his admission into the Cabinet? Could Lord Liver-



pool, or would he, have placed his own tenure of office upon the admittance into the Ministry of a man who demanded from him the sacrifice of his principles? Could he in honour or in fairness have insisted with his anti-Catholick colleagues on Mr. Canning's being invited to join them, if Catholick emancipation had been made a condition of that junction? It is impossible to answer these questions affirmatively; and it is idle, therefore, to argue that Mr. Canning had it in his power to have compelled the Cabinet to yield. Not having it in his power, it can hardly be maintained that the Catholick cause would have been advanced by his departure from England, which was the alternative to which he would have been reduced, had he failed in his efforts to force it upon the Cabinet. By accepting office, he was enabled to give the question all the benefit of his own individual exertions, backed by the weight and authority which the second station in the Government necessarily confers upon the individual who holds it. By refusing, he would have withdrawn his own talents from the cause, and would have left the weight and authority of that station in the hands of an adversary of Emancipation.

But even had he had the power, on what principle could he have declined the offer which was made to him on account of the Catholick

question? He could not have refused to serve under an anti-Catholick Premier, after he had been acting under Lord Liverpool for nearly five years. He could not have declined to join a divided Cabinet, after he had repeatedly declared his conviction, that it was impossible, in the existing state of parties, and the opinions of publick men, to form an Administration united on this question. Mr. Tierney, and those who held his language, suggested no reason why he ought to have declined, save that, by so doing, they were of opinion that he might have “compelled his colleagues to take him upon his own terms.” This opinion, however, subsequent events have demonstrated to be erroneous: but granting that it was correct, Mr. Canning could not have attempted to have forced the Government, without being guilty of the grossest inconsistency.

Mr. Brougham followed up Mr. Tierney's notion, that Mr. Canning might have reduced the Ministry to concede Emancipation, and went on to taunt him with having abandoned his opinions, “at the critical moment at which,” said Mr. Brougham, “his (Mr. Canning's) fate depended upon the Lord Chancellor Eldon, and his sentiments on the Catholick cause. If,” continued the learned gentleman, “he who had said on a former night “he would not truckle to Lord Folkstone, but

“ who had exhibited a specimen, the most incredible specimen of monstrous truckling, for the purpose of obtaining office, that the whole history of political tergiversation could furnish — ” Mr. Canning, who, in the preceding part of the evening, had been somewhat irritated by the misrepresentations which had been put upon his conduct on this question, when he heard himself thus wrongfully accused of the basest treachery, could contain himself no longer. Conscious of his innocence, and regardless of every thing but his honour, he at once interrupted Mr. Brougham with this short but emphatic sentence, — “ Sir, I rise to say, that that is false.”

A dead silence for a few seconds followed the remark. Mr. Brougham was preparing to quit the House, but was restrained by his friends. The Speaker then observed, that Mr. Canning had violated the customs and orders of the House, and that he deeply regretted that, even in haste, such an expression should have been used.

Mr. Canning lamented that he had violated the decorum of the House, but no consideration on earth should induce him to retract the sentiment. The Speaker called upon the House to support him in requiring Mr. Canning to recall his expression.

Mr. Canning expressed his sorrow for having

violated the order of the House; "but if he were to be required to recall his declaration, by an admission that his impression was erroneous, as to the expressions which had been applied to him, he could not in conscience do it."

After some vain attempts, by members on both sides the House, to induce Mr. Canning to recall, or Mr. Brougham to explain, what they had respectively said, Mr. Banks moved that the two gentlemen should be committed to the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Mr. Wynne, Mr. Abercrombie, Mr. Wilmot, and Sir Francis Burdett addressed the House to prevent the necessity of the motion being pressed.

Sir Robert Wilson then said that he was satisfied that Mr. Brougham's expressions were addressed to Mr. Canning in his official capacity, and that he thought the interruption of Mr. Canning arose from a firm conviction that the expressions were "personal, and no otherwise intended." With this "view of the case, he thought that Mr. Canning might, consistently with his honour and his feelings, say, that it was under an impression that the language was meant to be personal, that he had applied the epithet which had called forth the discussion."

Mr. Canning upon this said, that he acceded to "the suggestion of Sir Robert, under the assurance that Mr. Brougham denied the in-

“tention to convey any personal imputation in  
 “the language which he had used, a denial,  
 “which, if Mr. Brougham did not make, he  
 “wished to be understood as retracting nothing.  
 “Personal he had considered that language, as  
 “it meant to impute to him the acceptance of  
 “the office which he held, after having made  
 “unbecoming submissions to a high individual in  
 “the administration for the sake of obtaining it.  
 “Such an imputation he felt to have been cast,  
 “not on his official, but his private, character.  
 “If that imputation should be denied, he was  
 “ready to avow, that in what he had stated  
 “subsequently, he was mistaken; if, on the  
 “other hand, it should be avowed, he retracted  
 “nothing.”

Mr. Canning having said this, the Speaker  
 called on Mr. Brougham to say whether he  
 meant to apply the words which he had used in  
 a personal sense.

Mr. Brougham said that “he could not re-  
 “member his exact ‘expressions,’ but he re-  
 “membered his meaning. What he meant to  
 “say was this—he used the words *political ter-*  
 “*giversation*. He described Mr. Canning’s con-  
 “duct as something which stood prominent in the  
 “history of Parliamentary tergiversation. The  
 “expression was a strong one, but he had heard  
 “it used over and over again, without its having  
 “given offence. He was sure he had never

“ heard of any occasion on which it was more  
 “ accurately applied. He entertained a strong  
 “ feeling, and meant to express it with respect  
 “ to Mr. Canning’s publick and political life;  
 “ but as a private individual he had never known  
 “ aught of him but what did him the highest  
 “ honour. He did feel strongly on this passage  
 “ of Mr. Canning’s life; but he had not used the  
 “ expressions in question for party or factious,  
 “ and least of all for personal, purposes. He  
 “ considered that Mr. Canning had by his speech  
 “ at Liverpool, for the first time in his (Mr. Can-  
 “ ning’s) life, and for the first time in the his-  
 “ tory of the Catholick question, as connected  
 “ with him, said that he (Mr. Canning) did not  
 “ wish that question to be discussed again in  
 “ Parliament. If Mr. Canning had not said so,  
 “ he would readily beg his pardon.”

Mr. Brougham then went on to say, that this  
 speech being made just at a moment when it was  
 doubtful whether Mr. Canning would go to  
 India, or take office at home, coupled with the  
 known opinions of Lord Eldon on the subject  
 of emancipation, did lead Mr. Brougham to  
 infer that it was made for the sake of conciliating  
 the Lord Chancellor. “ He was aware,” he said,  
 “ that it was wrong to impute motives to any  
 “ one; and he gathered from Mr. Canning that  
 “ he had been wrong in doing so in this in-  
 “ stance.”

After a few more observations, Mr. Brougham sat down. Mr. Peel and Mr. Tierney thought the explanations which were given on each side were equally satisfactory to the House and honourable to both parties. Mr. Banks withdrew his motion, and Mr. Brougham and Mr. Canning both said that they should think no more of what had passed.

It cannot be denied that Mr. Canning acted wrongly in saying what he did. The expression of which he made use was both intemperate and unparliamentary; and yet, notwithstanding this, the uncontrolled indignation which he manifested, found such sympathy in all honourable breasts, that it contributed very considerably to raise him in the estimation both of the House and of the country. A vague notion was afloat, that he had truckled to the Lord Chancellor at the time that he had accepted office. Nothing but an entire consciousness that he had not done so, in the smallest degree, could have given him the courage to deny it as stoutly as he did. A man conscious of baseness may hate the individual who reproaches him with it, but he is not fired with indignation. Indignation is a feeling which no guilty mind can experience. Mr. Canning's indignation was a proof of his innocence; as such it was received by the world; and, what is more, was one of the circumstances in his conduct which contributed to

“satisfy” the individual who excited it (as, highly to the credit of that individual, he has since confessed), that “Mr. Canning was disposed to act a high, manly, and honourable part.” \*

It is hardly necessary to remind the reader how entirely at variance what Mr. Canning really did say at Liverpool was, with what Mr. Brougham imagined that he had said.

When this business was over, Mr. Brougham finished his speech; and after a few observations from some other members, the petition was ordered to lie upon the table.

The Speaker then called upon Mr. Plunket, upon which Sir Francis Burdett, and several other members of the Opposition benches, left the House. Mr. Plunket proceeded with the question, and after a powerful speech, concluded by moving for a committee to enquire into the disqualifying laws affecting His Majesty’s Roman Catholick subjects.

As soon as the question had been put from the Chair, loud cries of question were raised. The House seemed determined not to listen to any further debate, and, after four different motions for adjournment, the motion, “That this House do now adjourn,” was carried by a

\* This declaration is so honourable to the person who made it, that it is hoped the quotation of a private letter will be pardoned. — *The Author.*



majority of 313 to 111 ; and thus the question was indirectly disposed of, for the success of which there was no hope in the then temper of the House.

Parliament was prorogued on the 19th of July ; nearly 'half' the time of the House of Commons having been devoted to the affairs of Ireland.

## CHAP. VII.

PROGRESS OF THE FRENCH TROOPS IN SPAIN.—PROCEEDINGS OF THE CORTES AT SEVILLE—AND THEIR RETREAT TO CADIZ. — DUC D'ANGOULÊME'S ADVANCE WITH HIS ARMY TO CADIZ. — NEGOTIATIONS AT THAT CITY. — FALL OF CADIZ. — KING'S SUBSEQUENT CONDUCT. — STATE OF SPAIN AT THE END OF THE YEAR 1825. — DEBATES IN PARLIAMENT ON SPANISH AFFAIRS. — MR. CANNING'S "SYSTEM" OF POLICY.

THE efforts of Mr. Canning to prevent the invasion of Spain by France having proved ineffectual, the next object to which they were directed, was, the taking care that British interests should sustain the least possible injury from the results of that invasion. Such, however, was the nature of the enterprise, that whether it terminated successfully, or unsuccessfully, it could not fail of being more or less detrimental to Great Britain.

An unsuccessful termination was, however, of the two, that one which was the most to be deprecated ; since it would more surely, and certainly more speedily, have involved this country in war. Still, success would have been far from being without its disadvantages.

On the one hand, in the event of the French being defeated, or meeting with a resistance so protracted as to call for fresh and large supplies of men and money, if it had not produced, as it probably would have done, internal commotions in France, from the effects of which England could not have escaped uninjured, would, most indubitably, have ensured the armed interference of the Alliance, either against Spain, or against the revolutionary spirit of the French People. In such a contest, with all the great Powers of Continental Europe arrayed on the side of Absolutism and Legitimacy against the just rights, and reasonable privileges of the people, England, with her free Constitution, could neither have shown indifference, nor preserved neutrality.

On the other hand, if the French contrived to overthrow the Spanish Constitutional Government, and to restore Ferdinand to absolute power, the temporary occupation of the Peninsula by a French force would have been necessary to uphold a Government, thus established by Foreign interference, upon the ruins of another Government, which, even if it had become un-

popular, was originally set up by the Nation, and had had sufficient strength to maintain itself against domestick treason.

Now, France holding military possession of Spain was at once hurtful to the pride, and injurious to the interests of England.

Such a state of things, therefore, could only be tolerated for a time, but still was, by no means, such as must necessarily have ended in war. On the contrary, so long as France abstained from attacking Portugal; from any design to establish a permanent military occupation of Spain; and from any attempt, either direct or indirect, against the independence of Spanish America, so long there was little, or no probability, of her coming into collision with England.

As to Portugal, experience had taught the French how small was their chance of conquering that country, if it should be defended by British troops; even, though they made the attack with a much larger army, and with a more experienced General than they thought fit to employ against Spain. Besides, if they were triumphant in Spain; and it is only in the supposition of their being so, that there was any possibility of their invading Portugal; they would hardly have been disposed to risk the loss of all the advantages of that triumph, by bringing into the field against them a far more formidable

enemy than they had yet encountered. Again, had they been defeated in Portugal by the English, the Alliance would have immediately proffered marching troops to their assistance, an offer which it would have been no easy matter for the French Government to have declined, but which, as has been already seen, it would have been most unwilling to have accepted. As far, therefore, as Portugal was concerned, there was any thing but an immediate prospect of this country being called upon to fulfil her treaties, by defending her against the aggression of France. So likewise, there was little cause to fear that the French Government would resolve upon a permanent occupation of Spain, after Mr. Canning had declared that this Country would not hesitate to commence hostilities to prevent it: and when Spain was in a condition too exhausted to hold out sufficient inducement to France, to seek to maintain a lasting possession of that country, at the risk of a rupture with England.

If, therefore, there were no immediate danger of our being involved in a war with France, either in defence of Portugal, or to prevent Spain being converted into a French Colony, still less chance was there of a collision on account of Spanish America.

It might be, and probably was, quite true, that the French Ministers would have been well

pleased, either to have appropriated to themselves a portion of those vast territories, or to have restored them to the dominion of the Mother Country, in order that, through the Mother Country, France might have acquired an influence over them. But with what prospect of accomplishing the object would the attempt have been made, with the certainty that the English Fleet would have been ready to intercept any Armaments fitted out for the purpose? And if there were no such prospect, was it likely that the French Government would have undertaken an expedition, of which they could have had no hope that it would have been able to secure the end for which it was designed.

It appears, therefore, while this country was likely to avoid a war if the French were successful, that war was almost inevitable, if they met with reverses.

Did Mr. Canning, therefore, wish their cause to prosper? Certainly not. His heart was too noble to desire the triumph of injustice; but the fact that the overthrow of the French would be more injurious to Great Britain than their triumph, furnished him, as a British Statesman, with ample reason for not advising the adoption of any measures which could contribute to that overthrow; and this the more, because the Spanish nation was so little deserving of victory. Who, indeed, could sympathize with a people

one half of whom looked with a favourable eye upon their invaders, while the other wanted spirit to resist them? Who could care whether the cause of liberty flourished or not in Spain, when one portion of her population were confessedly hostile to it, and the other, who professed to be its defenders, were ready to betray it for a bribe?

Neutrality, therefore, in its strictest sense, was the course which honour and interest prescribed to this country. On that course the Cabinet from the beginning resolved, and the sanction of Parliament enabled them to persevere in their resolution.

What remained for Mr. Canning to do was, to endeavour, if France were unsuccessful, to prevent, if possible, the interference of the Alliance; if successful, then, in the first place, to hinder any step, being taken by the French, which England would be necessitated to oppose by war; and, in the next, to seek some means of compensation for the disparagement to which She would be exposed by the Peninsula being brought under French dominion. For the prevention of any such step, Mr. Canning took the most effectual measures, by clearly explaining in the outset to the French Government what conduct on its part would provoke hostilities on ours. What he did to compensate England for her disparagement must be left to be related in a subsequent part of this History.

We must now return to the proceedings of the Duc d'Angoulême, an attempt to shake the fidelity of whose army, ere it had crossed the frontiers, was made by a party of French Refugees (assembled on the Spanish side of the Bidassoa), who raised at the same time the tri-coloured flag, and the well known cry of "Vive L'Empereur."

The flag was saluted, and the cry was answered, only by a discharge of musketry and cannon, from the regiments which were encamped on the opposite side.

The next day the French army entered the Spanish territory : it amounted to something less than 100,000 men, including the Spanish Royalist division under Espana, and Quesada.

The Constitutional forces consisted of the Army of the North under Ballasteros ; that of Catalonia under Mina ; and that of the centre under Abisbal ; each of which were calculated to have numbered about 20,000 men. Besides these, there were the Armies of Gallicias and Asturias, amounting to about 10,000 men, under Morillo, and about 50,000 men dispersed in the several Garrisons.

The French professed to enter Spain, not for the purpose of making war upon that country, but merely to enable the Spanish Absolutists to overthrow the Established Government. "France is not at war with Spain," said the Duc d'An-



goulême in his proclamation to the Spaniards, and, "I cross the Pyrenees to assist the friends of order in setting free their captive King, and rescuing the nation from the dominion of the ambitious few, who now constitute its Government." And in conformity with this principle, the French army "were to pay for every thing; the Spanish standard alone was to float over Spanish cities, and the Governments of the provinces traversed by the French were to be administered in the name of Ferdinand, by Spanish authorities." Moreover, no letters of marque against Spanish ships were to be issued by the French Government.

The way in which the French were received by the mass of the Spanish population fully justified the wisdom of this policy, since the troops were every where hailed as liberators by the populace.

The important fortresses of Pampeluna and St. Sebastian, which were garrisoned by Constitutional troops, refused, however, to surrender, when summoned by the French; but these fortresses did not delay the march of the Duc d'Angoulême, who, having taken measures for masking them, proceeded on his road towards Madrid.

No effort to arrest the progress of his army towards the capital was made by the army of the North under Ballasteros, who retired down the

course of the Ebro, followed by a French corps. The Duc d'Angoulême entered Burgos, on the 9th of May, without having encountered any opposition, and thence continued his march in two columns to Madrid; the one, under the Duke de Reggio, marching by Valladolid, the other, under the Duc d'Angoulême himself, by Aranda and Buitrago.

It was at this last place, which he reached on the 17th of May, that His Royal Highness received a flag of truce from the Condé del Abisbal, and the Municipality of Madrid, proposing that the Spanish troops, which were to defend the city, should evacuate it; but that a part of the garrison should be allowed to remain, until the arrival of the French army, with the view of preventing a collision of the various parties into which the populace were divided, should they cease to be overawed by a superior force.

A convention was accordingly agreed upon, by which it was arranged that a corps of Abisbal's army, under Zayas, should remain in the metropolis until the 24th, by which day it was calculated that the French troops might arrive.

Their near approach to the capital without the slightest effort having been made to resist them, excited great discontent amongst that portion of the populace of Madrid, which was attached to the Constitutional cause; and suspicion, apparently not without reason, began to

be generally entertained of the treachery of Abisbal. It appears, that that General had on the 15th of May written a letter, in answer to one from the Count de Montejo, in which letter he stated it to be his opinion that the majority of the Spanish nation were hostile to the Constitution. Copies of this letter he sent to Ballasteros, Mina, and Morillo, and likewise circulated some amongst the officers of his own army. By these last, the declaration of this opinion was so ill received, that Abisbal published a disavowal of the interpretation which had been put upon the expressions of his letter, together with a declaration of his unalterable attachment to the Constitution; but this measure did not restore him to the confidence of his officers, who waited upon him in a body on the morning of the 18th, and charged him with having betrayed his trust. A quarrel ensued. Abisbal resigned his command, and quitted Madrid for France, being furnished with passports by the French Generals.

So soon as Abisbal had resigned, the Marquis of Castel Rias assumed the command of his army; and, in compliance with the Convention which had been entered into with the French, immediately evacuated Madrid, leaving behind him a small corps, under Zayas, to prevent a re-action taking place before their arrival.

To produce that re-action an attempt was

made, two days after the departure of the main body of the Constitutional army, by Bessières, the Royalist Chief, who, for the purpose of co-operating with a part of the populace of Madrid, had, by forced marches, got a few days' start of the French. His force, however, was dispersed by Zayas; but this occurrence induced the French Commanders to hasten the march of their army, which took possession of the Capital on the 23d, one day sooner than had been agreed. On the following day the Duc d'Angoulême made his publick entry, was enthusiastically welcomed by many of the inhabitants, and had a congratulatory address presented to him, signed by thirty-one Grandees.

The French, thus in possession of Madrid, were not much nearer to the completion of their enterprise than they were at its very commencement; and none were more fully aware that this was the case than the French Ministers at Paris, who undoubtedly felt no inconsiderable fear, notwithstanding the numbers of their Royalist Allies, for the ultimate fate of the expedition.

It was evident that its conclusion depended on the invading army getting possession of the person of Ferdinand; and while His Majesty was at Seville, with Cadiz behind him as a place of refuge for himself and the Cortes, the period of his liberation seemed still as uncertain as ever. The efforts, however, of the two Con-

stitutional Generals, Ballasteros and Morillo, left little cause for apprehension.

They seemed ready to follow the example of Abisbal; and although Mina, the ablest of the Spanish Generals, was,

“ faithful found

“ Amongst the faithless, faithful only he,”

yet was he in the midst of a population, a considerable portion of which was adverse to his cause; and moreover had to conduct his operations in Catalonia, the proximity of which province to France, diminished to the French the difficulty of carrying on hostilities against him.

It was not, therefore, so much from the resistance of the Constitutional Generals that the French Government foresaw difficulties in the prosecution of their enterprise, as from the disposition of those to whom the French troops had come as auxiliaries.

The conduct of that party might have proved fatal, either through its imprudence, or its treachery.

For, in the first place, it was so unmanageable and violent, that the outrages, which, in many instances, its partisans did commit, and which in all probability they would have committed, had they not been restrained by the French troops, bade fair, by making the cause of the Constitution the less odious of the two

to those whose chief desire was the maintenance of something like tranquillity and order, to have turned the whole neutral part of the population against those, who came avowedly to restore to power the perpetrators of such excesses. The proceedings also of the Provisional Junta seemed not less likely to lead to embarrassing results. Notwithstanding that that body was actually attached to the head-quarters of the French, the latter were wholly unable to controul it; and a proclamation issued in its name, put forth in defiance of the Duc d'Angoulême, was so intemperate in its language, that it was calculated to drive to despair those individuals on whose will the safety of the King and Royal Family of Spain depended.

In the next place, a long defence of Cadiz might have made the besiegers wearisome to their friends, the Apostolicals, who, if it had been their humour to grow tired of the presence of a foreign army in their country, might not have hesitated to have turned against it, although they themselves had been the means of its introduction. Besides all these causes for anxiety, the temper of the French people was so doubtful, that orders were actually issued to the *Prefets* of the different Departments to prosecute any person who should venture to circulate unfavourable intelligence from the armies.

The first object, therefore, of the French Ministers was to liberate the King of Spain; and

to effect their purpose they were ready to have recourse to any plan, whether of treachery or surprise.

Their next object was, in case they found themselves in a dangerous position, from which extrication would be difficult, to be in a condition to come to terms with the Cortes. For this end they again sought the mediation of England; but although the mediation was earnestly requested, no distinct propositions were brought forward, their design being apparently to get England to induce the Cortes to offer terms of accommodation, which they might either accept or reject according as circumstances, at the moment, might render advisable.

Mr. Canning, however, was not to be deceived, and therefore insisted, before he would consent to interfere, that "some specifick suggestion should be made by the French Ministers, and some positive pledge given by them to abide the issue of any negotiation founded on it." For it was quite obvious that unless the British Minister was prepared to say what concessions would satisfy the French, and induce them to desist from their enterprise, the Cortes would have had little inducement to concede, since they could not be assured that their concessions would have any useful consequences. But the French Ministers were unwilling to be fettered by pledging themselves to any particular line of policy; and, although

they persisted in expressing their earnest wishes for the aid of England, they carefully abstained from complying with the only condition by which they could expect that aid could be secured.

While the French Government and Army were thus severally employed, the Cortes were assembled at Seville.

The news of the arrival of the French Army at Madrid spread dismay amongst the Members. They had quitted the Capital the day following that on which Ferdinand had departed, and the reception which they had met with on their journey from the inhabitants of the towns and villages through which they passed, contributed to convince many of them who had reckoned on a determined resistance to the invaders, that neither enthusiasm nor sacrifices for the Constitution were to be expected from the people. The desire for peace, and the establishment of order under any form of Government whatsoever, seemed to be the general feeling; and the hopes of ultimate success entertained by the Cortes, were, on their first reaching Seville, evidently only founded on the disaffection of the French army, and the bringing about a fresh revolution in France. To encourage rebellion against the Bourbon Dynasty, and to serve as a rallying point for the disaffected, a corps of French deserters, and re-



fuguee officers, had been (before the removal of the Government) organized at Madrid, and sent to the frontiers: and such was the blind miscalculation of those who had been most clamorous against any concessions being made, that all along they had chiefly depended on the exertions of these men for the defence of the Constitutional Government. The signal defeat which attended the attempt to seduce the French soldiers from their allegiance has already been mentioned. But before the news either of its failure, or of the Duc d'Angoulême having crossed the boundary, had reached Seville, the tone of the Exaltados was so much softened by what they had seen of the feelings of the people, that they began to preach the necessity of leaving nothing undone, that could be done with honour, to avoid the alternative of war.

The King arrived at Seville on the 10th of April, without any thing remarkable having occurred in the course of his journey from Madrid. The Cortes opened on the 23d of the same month, when the President congratulated the Assembly upon the manifestations of confidence and attachment on the part of all ranks of the people, which had greeted the Members on their road to Seville!

At the same sitting, M. de San Miguel stated (in answer to questions put to him), that no propositions either direct or indirect had been

made to Spain by the French Government, and that nothing had passed upon the subject of a possible arrangement, but in unofficial conversations between the French Ministers and the British Ambassador at Paris.

On the 24th the declaration of War was published against France, and on the same day, M. San Miguel read his Report on the Foreign Relations of Spain; in which he gave a description (by no means an accurate one) of the circumstances attending the Negotiations with France. This done, and the other Ministers having also presented their Reports; in conformity with the King's declaration before His Majesty left Madrid, that the continuance in office of M. de San Miguel and his Colleagues was to determine so soon as they had discharged this duty, they resigned their situations on the 26th of April, leaving the Sovereign without any Ministry whatever.

After a fortnight's interregnum, a new Administration was at last appointed, of which M. Calatrava was the head, as Minister of Grace and Justice, and M. Pando, from being fourth clerk in the Secretary of State's Office, was raised to the post itself of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; M. Yandioña was named Minister of Finance; Don Garcia Herreros, of the Interior; and Zarco del Valle, of War. The new Ministers apparently had but little influence

over the progress of events. M. Pando was at first desirous of entering into Negotiations with the French. M. Calatrava was opposed to any such measure, but the other Ministers rather inclined to M. Pando's opinion. Still, however, no one, either in the Ministry or out of it, had sufficient boldness to propose Negotiations in the Cortes, from the uncertainty as to the manner in which such a proposition would be received.

In the meanwhile, time was wearing on, and no steps were being taken for bringing about an amicable settlement: so that, when the several accounts of the failure of the attempt to induce the French Soldiery to desert, of their unresisted advance, and of the enthusiasm with which they were every where received by the Spanish People, reached Seville, the only effect which was produced on those of the more violent party, was reducing them to despair; and that despair only made them more than ever hostile to concession: since, as they argued, if the Constitutional fabrick was doomed to perish, it was better that it should fall from the force of circumstances, than from any demonstration of weakness or pusillanimity in those entrusted with its defence. As for the moderate party, they reasoned in a different way; and one of them, Prince Anglona, actually proposed in the Council of State to make a representation to the Ministry to induce

it to enter into Negotiations with the French. The Council rejected the proposal, although they acknowledged its policy: the Members declaring, that they were afraid to affix their signatures to such a representation. So likewise not one of them ventured to originate in the Cortes any measures for conciliation, while they clung to the hope that some overtures might yet be made on the part of the Duc d'Angoulême — a hope, which was nurtured, by the appearance at Seville of a sort of half-recognised Agent from the Duc, in the person of an Englishman: but whether this man came as a spy to ascertain the real posture of Affairs—or, as is more probable, to see what could be done by bribery amongst the leading men, to induce them to deliver up the King, is a matter which is somewhat doubtful. At any rate, no regular official offers were made by His Royal Highness, and every day's delay rendered it more difficult for the Cortes to volunteer concessions, and less hazardous for the French to push matters to extremities.

During the sojourn of the Cortes at Seville, several decrees were issued suited to the emergency; the nature of which decrees it is unnecessary now to mention, with the exception of one, sanctioning an agreement for raising 10,000 troops by Sir Robert Wilson, who, with that chivalrous generosity in the cause of Freedom,

which is the distinguishing feature of his character, had come to Spain to place his Services at the disposal of the Constitutional Government. But the issuing of decrees was a far easier task than the carrying of them into execution ; for the power of the Executive Government, whose duty it was to give effect to them, scarcely extended ten miles beyond the seat of its establishment.

As a proof of its infirmity of purpose, its conduct towards General Lopes Banos may be cited. That General having refused the offer which was made to him of the command in Valencia, in rather an offensive manner to the Government, an official letter was sent to him, informing him that the King had no further occasion for his services. Two days after the General had received notice of his dismissal from the King's service, he was restored to his rank, and appointed to succeed Count Abisbal in the command of the Army of the Centre !

While the Cortes were thus engaged, the Duc d'Angoulême determined on continuing the march of two strong divisions of his Army towards Seville : and on the 7th of June the news of the defeat of General Plasencia at Santa Cruz, who had a corps of about 1500 men under his command, by one of those divisions, and the consequent advance of that division on Cordova, came to the ears of the Cortes.

As that Body had neither any Army to resist, nor hardly any Force to retard the arrival of the Duc d'Angoulême under the walls of Seville, these two events warned them that there was no safety but in flight.

The Ministers accordingly announced to the King the necessity of immediately retiring to Cadiz.

His Majesty replied, that “they might as well  
 “ put a pistol to his head ; that he had quitted  
 “ Madrid at the solicitation of his Ministers and  
 “ the Cortes, in order not to show any reluctance  
 “ to leave to the decision of the nation whether  
 “ it would or would not come forward to sup-  
 “ port the existing order of things ; that the  
 “ appeal to the nation had been entirely with-  
 “ out effect ; and such being the case, it was in  
 “ vain to hope any thing more from a second  
 “ removal, which could be of no other use than  
 “ to prolong the struggle for a week or two.”

His Majesty, however, promised to consult the Council of State before he gave a definitive answer.

On the 10th the Council gave its opinion in favour of removal, but decidedly against conveying the Royal Family to Cadiz. The Ministers left His Majesty the choice of repairing either to Cadiz, Algesiras, or San Roque. The King declared in the most positive manner that

he would not consent to set out for either one of the three.

On the 11th, the Ministers were summoned to the Cortes to give information as to the dispositions of the King, when they stated that they could only say that His Majesty had not taken any decided resolution respecting his departure.

Upon this the Ministers being asked whether they thought the Constitution could be preserved if the Government were not removed from Seville, M. Calatrava answered, that the Ministers were satisfied that the safety of the Country depended on the removal taking place. The Cortes then declared their session permanent, and Signor Galiano moved that the King should once more be invited to set out for Cadiz; and, in the event of his refusal to do so, that he should be declared to have fallen within the meaning of that clause of the Constitution which provides for the case of incapacity in the sovereign, and that a Regency should be appointed. This motion was carried; and a deputation was immediately named to proceed with it to the Palace. About six o'clock in the evening the deputation returned, and announced His Majesty's determined resolution not to set out. This was instantly followed by a declaration of his incapacity, and by the nomination of a Regency.

On the following day, the 12th, the King and his family left Seville, escorted by 1500 regular troops, and about 2500 militia. Not a disturbance of any kind attended the departure; and His Majesty reached Cadiz on the 15th, without having experienced any interruption, or annoyance.

Notwithstanding the vigorous nature of this measure, and the resolution which it appeared to indicate on the part of its promoters, they in point of fact had little hope that they should be able to prolong by it, for any length of time, the existence of the Constitutional System. Many of them appeared to be frightened at their own work, and did not proceed to Cadiz; and so reluctant were the Constitutional Generals to commit themselves, by taking a part in the transaction, that every one of them in Seville, from Zayas down to the lowest brigadier, refused to take the command of the King's escort, so that the Cortes were obliged privately to pass a law enabling them to employ Riégo for that purpose. M. Pando, and some of the other Ministers, tendered their resignations, which were accepted by His Majesty before his departure.

Of the Diplomatick Body who were with the Court at Seville, the Saxon minister alone followed the King, to watch over the safety of the Queen. Sir William à Court remained behind.



A few hours after the appointment of the Regency and temporary deposition of the King had been resolved upon by the Cortes, Sir William received a summons from His Majesty to repair immediately to the Palace. Sir William lost no time in obeying the Royal commands; and when he came into His Majesty's presence the King acted over again the same kind of scene that took place previous to his departure from Madrid.

He declared that he was about to be carried off to Cadiz as a private individual, and a prisoner, and that every thing that he thenceforth did must be considered as forced upon him.

It was not, however, in consequence of this declaration of Ferdinand's that the British Minister determined, before he proceeded to Cadiz, to wait for instructions from his Government; for, had such been the case, he would have been equally bound to have abstained from following His Majesty to Seville. Neither did he mean to pronounce an opinion whether the Government, as constituted during the abeyance of the King's authority, was or was not a competent Government; but the manner of the King's removal exactly fitted the case pointed out in his instructions. "It was accompanied with circumstances such as marked a determined reluctance on his part, and a manifest *duresse* of his person."

Sir William, therefore, did not follow the King to Cadiz, but waited for orders from home as to how he was to act in such a novel and unexpected case, as that of the temporary subversion of the kingly power.

Sir William, therefore, addressed a note to M. Pando, in order to show the line which it was his intention to follow. The King, he said, having been declared unfit to reign, and another Government having been installed, he found it impossible to follow the newly-created Spanish authorities in their march to Cadiz. "He was unwilling to sanction by his presence the steps which had been taken, and should therefore await at Seville, or San Lucar, fresh instructions from his Government."

The morning of the 13th, the day after the King's departure, a desperate riot occurred at Seville, attended with pillage, and loss of lives. The rioters destroyed the Lapida of the Constitution, and the Archives of the Government and Cortes. During the 13th and 14th, nearly all the Authorities which existed before the Revolution were re-established. Deserters came in from the Constitutional Armies in immense numbers, so that a sort of Royalist Military force was set on foot in the town.

The triumph, however, of the Absolutists received a temporary check, on the morning of the 16th. The refusal of the people of Triana

to permit the soldiers of General Lopes Banos to cross the bridge there, led to an action, in which the latter were successful.

The consequence was the capture of Seville by Lopes Banos, who restored all the Constitutional Authorities, and levied contributions on the inhabitants.

While all these transactions were taking place at Seville, the Duc d'Angoulême continued at Madrid. His Royal Highness, on entering that Capital, had issued a Proclamation, appealing to the Spaniards whether he had not fully acted up to his declaration, that he was not come to make War upon Spain. Every thing, he said, had been paid for by the French Army. No contributions had been exacted, and the Administration of the Provinces had been placed in the hands of Spaniards.

The Proclamation further stated, that the time was come when it would be necessary to form a Regency, and for this purpose the Supreme Councils of Castile and the Indies were to be convoked, for the purpose of selecting those individuals of whom it was to be composed.

The two Councils met, but not considering themselves authorised to establish a Regency, they merely furnished the Duc d'Angoulême with a list of those whom they judged most competent for the office. The persons named

were, the Duc del Infantado, the Duc del Montema, the Bishop of Osma, the Baron d'Erolles, and M. Calderon. The Regency thus constituted, was formally recognised by the Duc d'Angoulême on the 26th.

While His Royal Highness was settling this matter, a considerable portion of the army, which accompanied him to Madrid, proceeded (as has been before stated) on their march to Seville.

When the smallness of the French force is considered in comparison with the extent of the country which it occupied, the Duc d'Angoulême may perhaps appear somewhat rash for having decided to disperse his army, still more by despatching so large a portion of it to Seville; but, when it is remembered that the War could not be terminated, but by the possession of Ferdinand's person — that the French had to act in the midst, for the most part, of a friendly population, and that there was little to be feared from the Constitutional Generals, in consequence of the defection of Abisbal—and the probability, of which the Duc was not unaware, that Morillo and Ballasteros would imitate his example—it cannot be doubted but that the determination to advance was, under all the circumstances, the wisest and most prudent that could have been adopted.

The appointment of the Regency by the Cortes, afforded to Morillo an opportunity to

declare his desertion of the Constitutional cause.

On the 25th of June he issued at Lugo, in Galicia, a Proclamation, saying, that he would not recognise the Regency appointed by the Cortes. He at the same time informed his Army, that he was about to treat with the French General. Quiroga, one of the ablest and staunchest of the Constitutional Generals, protested against these proceedings, and succeeded in inducing large bodies of Morillo's troops to desert, and to range themselves under him, in defence of the Constitution. Morillo, with his army thus reduced to about 3000 men, retired to the South towards Orense and Vigo; while Quiroga threw himself into Corunna, whither he was quickly followed by the French General Bourke, who arrived before the Town on the 15th of July. A severe action\* took place on the heights above the Town without any decided advantage to either party. The Spaniards, however, retired within the fortifications, and were summoned to surrender by the French. Quiroga refused, and having placed the Town in a state of defence, himself departed for Cadiz.

In the meanwhile, Mina, with consummate skill, and unparalleled exertions, was baffling

Sir Robert Wilson was wounded on this occasion. -

all the efforts of the much superior forces of the French to destroy him. The exertions, however, of this justly-celebrated Commander, were unfortunately not of a nature to have any decisive influence on the result of the contest; and Ballasteros, on whose conduct and fidelity much more depended, was retreating so rapidly before General Molitor to the Southern Provinces of the Peninsula, that he left, several days behind him, the corps under that General which was ordered to pursue him.

But although the French were thus in all directions getting the better of their most formidable opponents, they were not a little embarrassed by the proceedings of their friends. The conduct of the Regency, whom the Duc d'Angoulême himself had installed, was no better than that of the Provisional Junta, whose functions the former had superseded.

One of its first acts, after its instalment, was to re-appoint all the Ministers, who were in office before the breaking out of the Revolution, to their former situations, with the exception of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, in whose place, Don Victor Saez, the King's Confessor, an apostolical in the strictest sense of the word, was substituted!

A decree was also issued by it, annulling all the acts of the Constitutional Government, and incapacitating all persons who had held office

under that Government, from ever holding office under the King.

It was in vain that the Duc d'Angoulême remonstrated against these proceedings, both verbally, and in writing. His remonstrances had so little effect; that, in despair, he determined to confine his attention exclusively to military affairs, until Ferdinand's liberation; of which, as the Cortes had not even provisioned Cadiz for a siege, the prospect did not seem far distant.

The two divisions of the army, under Counts Bourdesoult, and Bourmont, met with little opposition on their march to Seville, with the exception of the slight affair already mentioned, between the Count Bourdesoult and the Constitutional General Plasencia, whose corps amounting to about 1500 men, was routed with little difficulty. The other division, under Count Bourmont, came up with the rear-guard of Lopes Banos' army, at Lucas la Mayor on the 19th, and took a considerable number prisoners.

From thence Count Bourmont proceeded to Seville, which city he reached \* three days after Lopes Banos, with the main body of his Army, had evacuated it, having kept possession of it for only eight and forty hours.

That General left Seville on the 18th, and retreated across the river with the view of gaining Huelva, and there embarking for Cadiz. A

\* 21st June.

French force of 8000 men was sent after him, by whom his Army was completely dispersed, and he himself obliged to seek his safety in flight. No army consequently remained to oppose the progress of the French to Cadiz, towards which place they began to push large masses of infantry, having declared it in a state of blockade, both by sea and land. The Duc d'Angoulême left Madrid on the 8th of July, to direct the operations against Cadiz, or, to prevent their necessity, by being on the spot ready to enter into negotiations for the delivery of the person of the King, in case the Cortes should be disposed to capitulate.

His Royal Highness arrived at Port St. Mary on the 17th of the following month. Before he arrived there, the War in Galicia had terminated by the surrender of Corunna; and Ballasteros, after having made some resistance on the Mountains near Grenada, where he was defeated, entered into a convention with General Molitor, whereby he consented himself to recognise the Madrid Regency, and agreed to send orders to the Governors of the Towns included within his command to follow his example.

All that remained to the Constitutionals after these defeats and defections of their Generals, were, the Town of Cadiz, and the fortresses in Catalonia, where the gallant Mina still made a vigorous resistance.



The French were, notwithstanding, in an uncertain position, since the violent conduct of the Regency still rendered a re-action possible. Moreover the King and Royal Family were as yet in the hands of the Cortes; and the King was known to have endeavoured to betray the Constitution, which he had sworn to preserve, from the very first moment of its establishment.

There was, therefore, no inconsiderable danger to His Majesty's person, if those, in whose power the Monarch was placed, were driven to desperation, when they had such heavy charges, which, at any rate, bore the semblance of justice, to bring against him.

It was to prevent such a catastrophe as this, that the Duc d'Angoulême published an ordinance at Andujar, on the 8th of August, forbidding any Spanish Authority to make an arrest without the sanction of the French Commanding Officer of the district; and ordering the French Officers to set at liberty, all who had been arrested for political offences. The Newspapers were likewise placed under the controul of the French Commander.

The publication of this ordinance excited a great ferment amongst the party with whom the French were co-operating. The Regency at Madrid protested against it as an attack on their authority; and others of the Royalists complained that the nation was outraged, by those

who had only come to protect it. Since the safety of the French Army in a great degree depended on the continued friendship of the Royalist Party, the Duc prudently issued a second ordinance, explaining and modifying the first.

Meanwhile Sir William à Court was waiting at Seville for fresh instructions from his Government.

It will be remembered, that, that Minister, in assigning to M. Pando his reasons for not following Ferdinand, abstained from pronouncing any opinion upon the legality, or justifiableness of the conduct of the Cortes towards the King; he so abstained, on purpose to leave it open to his Government, to instruct him to proceed to Cadiz, in the event of its being of opinion that his presence there would be desirable.

When Mr. Canning, therefore, was called upon to instruct the British Minister as to the course which he was to adopt in consequence of the proceedings at Seville, he decided that it was not for this country to consider the mere suspension of the Royal Authority for a limited period, as a reason for treating the King as if he were permanently dethroned, and was no longer the Representative of the Spanish Nation.

Sir William à Court was, therefore, instructed in case of his receiving an invitation from the

King of Spain, restored to his Authority, to resume his (Sir William's) residence, near his Majesty's person, that he was to be at liberty either to comply with that invitation forthwith, or to declare his inability to do so without special instructions, according as the circumstances, under which the invitation came, might appear to make an immediate compliance, or an interval of delay, advisable.

But if Sir William were to receive a pressing intimation from the King, that His Majesty's personal safety would be greatly assured by Sir William's presence at Cadiz, he was immediately to repair to that place.

If neither of those cases were to occur, and Sir William's presence in Spain should thereby become no longer necessary, as the King's Minister, to His Catholick Majesty ; since it would have been both inconvenient and unseemly, that Sir William should remain in any place in possession of the invading Army ; he was directed to proceed to Gibraltar: finding means to inform some leading members of the Cortes in Cadiz of his destination, in order that should his intervention be required to convey any propositions to the French Government or Army, he might be known to be at hand and ready to afford it.

A few days before these instructions reached Seville, Sir William had received from M. Pando, a note, informing him that the King had re-

sumed his functions, and inviting Sir William to proceed to Cadiz.

Sir William had deferred replying to this note until he should hear from England, and then, when he did so, the circumstance of the blockade of Cadiz having been publicly announced by the French Authorities, determined him to go to Gibraltar, rather than to Cadiz : but, in notifying his intention to M. Pando, in answer to that Minister's note, he did not neglect to express his readiness to afford his intervention (should it be solicited), in conveying any propositions, from the Constitutional Authorities in Cadiz, to the French Commanders, or to the French Government.

Sir William went by St. Lucar to Gibraltar, where he arrived on the 26th of July.

During this time little was being done in Cadiz to prepare against the assaults of the French. The Cortes had assembled the day after the arrival of the King, and His Majesty had been restored to that Authority, which was assigned to the Sovereign, by the Constitution.

The Cortes passed several decrees, directing the mode of defending provinces which had already ceased to acknowledge their Authority ; and by one, the mention of which must not be omitted, the thirty-one Grandees, who had signed the address to the Duc d'Angoulême, on his

entering Madrid, were deprived of their rank, their employments, and their property. On the 5th of August the ordinary Cortes closed their sittings. •

The day following that on which the Duc d'Angoulême arrived at Port St. Mary's, His Royal Highness made propositions to the Authorities in Cadiz to induce them to surrender.

He promised the Convocation of the ancient Cortes, according to the form observed during the reign of Charles the Third, and he offered to guarantee the security of the property of all the individuals composing the Constitutional Cortes and Government, although he refused to recognise them as a Corporate Body. Five days were allowed for the consideration of these proposals.

Ferdinand, however, did not take so long in replying, but, before the limited period had elapsed, returned an answer, in his own handwriting, rejecting the proposals, — repelling in strong terms the insinuation that he was under the controul of the Constitutional Authorities, and stating that since negotiations were pending with the British Government, which might lead to the acceptance of His Britannick Majesty's mediation by both parties, that he could not permit the Authorities of Cadiz to listen to the propositions contained in the Duc d'Angoulême's communication, and should direct them to continue their

resistance to the aggressions of the Continental Alliance.

The negotiations here spoken of by the King, probably alluded to some communications which Sir Robert Wilson (who, by this time, had found his way to Cadiz,) had had with the Spanish Ministers.

The knowledge of these communications was verbally conveyed to Sir William à Court, who lost no time in informing the Spanish Government, that it was impossible for him, as a British Minister, to allow himself to be joined, or in any way whatsoever connected with, Sir Robert Wilson, who was acting in defiance of the Government, which he (Sir William) represented. Sir William took the opportunity of once more repeating, that, upon his receiving an official written document soliciting his intervention, and stating what was the ultimatum, and upon what conditions the Spanish Government were prepared to treat, he would, at once, come forward, and make himself the channel for conveying any proposals to the Commander-in-Chief of the French army.

Before, however, this communication could have reached Cadiz, Sir William received from M. Yandiola, who was Minister for Foreign Affairs, a letter requesting his intervention with the French. Although a distinct declaration was made in this letter, that, under the existing

circumstances, Spain could not tender any definite propositions to the French Authorities; yet, with such a note in his hands, at such a moment, Sir William could not reconcile to himself the responsibility of doing nothing. Accordingly he forthwith informed M. Yandiola, in the answer which he returned, that since he had in clear and precise terms applied for the mediation of Great Britain; and since, before any intervention could be efficaciously exerted, it must be accepted, and approved by both parties, — and since until he (Sir William) could ascertain what were the feelings of the French Authorities, it would be impossible for him to show himself in the Bay of Cadiz, he would at once put himself in communication with them in order to be assured on this point.

Sir William accordingly addressed a note to the Duke d'Angoulême, stating, that the Spanish Ministers in communicating the correspondence that had taken place between Ferdinand and His Royal Highness, had solicited Sir William to come to Cadiz to try if any means could be found for reconciling conflicting interests: that he earnestly hoped that His Royal Highness would avail himself of this opening, either to offer such terms through Sir William to the Spanish Government as would justify him in recommending it to accept them; or that His Royal Highness would point out some other

way, in which the British intervention might be employed to bring about the establishment of an order of things which would not disappoint the just expectations of the Spanish people.

Mr. Eliot \*, the Secretary of Legation, was charged to convey this note to the French Head Quarters, and to give any further explanation which might be wanted. On his arrival, he was immediately honoured with an audience ; when, having delivered his note, the Duc observed, that his hands were so tied, that before he could agree to any conditions, he was imperatively bound to refer to Paris. Some further conversation took place between Mr. Eliot, and His Royal Highness. The only part of which, that it is essential to record (to mark the feelings of His Royal Highness), is, an answer returned by him to Mr. Eliot, who called the Duc's attention to the fact, that Sir William à Court could not tell what terms the Government in Cadiz would offer, but that Sir William imagined that a Representative Government would be a *sine quâ non* condition.

The Duc fully assented to the desirableness of establishing a similar form of Government ; but thought that the violence of the two parties, Jacobins, and Apostolicals, into which Spain was divided, would render the formation of such a Government almost impossible.

\* Now Lord Eliot.



Mr. Eliot returned on the 30th, bringing with him the reply of the Duc declining the offer of intervention ; but stating that he would lose no time in making the offer known to his Government, and on the following day Sir William communicated the result to the Spanish Minister.

Two days after, Mr. Eliot had left His Royal Highness's Head Quarters, the French assaulted, and succeeded in capturing the Fortress of the Trocadero, on which the safety of Cadiz in a great degree depended.

The fall of this Bulwark alarmed the defenders of Cadiz.

A letter, in the King's own hand-writing, was despatched to the Duc d'Angoulême proposing a suspension of hostilities, to afford an opportunity to treat for peace. To this the Duc replied, that he would only negotiate with Ferdinand himself, when restored to liberty. He added, " that when the King should be free, he should engage His Majesty to publish a general amnesty, and to give, or at least promise of his free will to give, such institutions as he should judge to be best adapted to the manners, and character of his people."

Ferdinand again wrote to know what was necessary to be done in order that he should be considered " free." The Duc replied that, before he could so consider him, the King and his family should be permitted to come to Port

**St. Mary.** His Royal Highness then promised that he would do his utmost with His Majesty to persuade him to pardon the past, and to grant such a Constitution to his people as he might deem best calculated for their happiness. He likewise stated that all those who might wish to quit Spain, should be allowed to do so, and a body of French Troops should enter Cadiz to preserve tranquillity.

In spite of this answer another attempt was made to induce the Duc to lower his conditions. Ferdinand wrote to His Royal Highness, saying, that he was at liberty to negotiate in some place, at an equal distance between the two armies, or on board of some neutral vessel. but this proposition shared the fate of those which had gone before it.

The Cortes now abandoned all hope of being able, themselves, to induce the French to listen to any terms short of the surrender of the King; on the possession of whose person the whole affair depended. It was therefore determined by the Ministers, to solicit the intervention of the British Minister with the French Commander. A letter was accordingly addressed by M. Luyando, a new Minister for Foreign Affairs, to Sir William à Court, proposing that Sir William should proceed to Cadiz, in order to receive the King and the Duc d'Angoulême on board a British Ship of War to treat in person for a

peace ; and further, asking, “ what guarantees England would afford ? ”

Sir William, immediately on the receipt of this communication, wrote to the Duc, acquainting His Royal Highness that if he thought proper to accept the terms proposed, he would immediately proceed to Cadiz, in a British Ship of War, to receive on board the two Royal personages in question. The Duc, however, unequivocally declared that he could admit of no mediation whatever, avowing it to be his conviction that the deliverance of the Spanish Royal Family was only to be effected by force of arms. The truth was, His Royal Highness was well aware that he could take the Town, whenever he chose to assault it. The only motive, therefore, that could have operated upon him to admit of the interference of a third party, would have been any fears which he might have entertained for the safety of the King and his family. But these fears could not have been very powerful, since he must have well known, that those in whose power Ferdinand then was, would infallibly be very shortly in his own power ; when they would have had to have answered with their lives for any violence committed on the Royal Person.

With respect to the question about guarantees, Sir William answered M. Luyando that, “ England could afford no guarantee for political

“ institutions ; but whether she could afford any  
 “ guarantee at all, of any kind, was a question  
 “ which he was not authorised to answer.” Sir  
 William, however, promised to submit the appli-  
 cation to his Government. When Mr. Canning  
 received it, he forthwith instructed Sir William  
 that “ the British Government would not, in  
 “ any case, undertake any guarantee whatever,  
 “ either of territory, or internal institutions.

“ The scrupulousness with which England  
 “ was in the habit of fulfilling her engagements,  
 “ made it the more necessary for her, not to  
 “ contract them lightly. A guarantee is one of  
 “ the most onerous obligations which one State  
 “ can contract towards another. A defensive  
 “ Alliance, binds the Government contracting  
 “ it, to come to the aid of its Ally in case of an  
 “ unprovoked attack upon his dominions : and  
 “ to make on his behalf, every reasonable and  
 “ practicable exertion — practicable in extent,  
 “ and reasonable in duration. But it does not  
 “ bind the assisting Government to the alterna-  
 “ tive of either a successful result, or an indefi-  
 “ nite prolongation of the War. A guarantee,  
 “ strictly construed, knows no limits either of  
 “ time, or of degree. It would be, unless dis-  
 “ tinctly restricted in that respect, claimable in  
 “ a War commenced by the Power to whom the  
 “ guarantee is given, as well as in a War of  
 “ unjust aggression against that Power ; and the

“ integrity of the territory of that Power must  
 “ be maintained, at whatever cost the effort to  
 “ maintain it is prolonged: nay, though the  
 • “ guaranteed Power should contribute almost  
 “ nothing to the maintaining it. If, on the other  
 “ hand, the engagement were to be restricted  
 “ in these particulars, it would constitute an  
 “ unilateral defensive Alliance, but it would  
 “ cease to be a guarantee; and objectionable as a  
 “ territorial guarantee was therefore shown to be,  
 “ the objections to a guarantee of internal institu-  
 “ tions were infinitely stronger. It is difficult to  
 “ say, whether these objections apply with greater  
 “ force to the party giving, or to that which re-  
 “ ceives such a guarantee.

“ The very principle on which the British  
 “ Government so earnestly deprecated the War  
 “ against Spain, was, that of the right of any  
 “ Nation to change, or to modify, its internal  
 “ institutions.

“ Was that War to end in the King of Eng-  
 “ land consenting to assume to himself the pro-  
 “ vince of defending, against all challenges, from  
 “ within, as well as from without, the Institutions,  
 “ whatever they might be, which the War might  
 “ leave standing in Spain?

“ Was His Majesty to guarantee the Constitu-  
 “ tion of 1812, indifference to which, to say the  
 “ least, was the single point upon which any  
 “ thing like an agreement of opinion had been

“ found to exist in Spain? or was the King to  
 “ guarantee the antient despotism, the restor-  
 “ ation of which, with all its accompaniments,  
 “ appeared to be the object of the largest party  
 “ in the Country? or was it to be in behalf of  
 “ some new system, struck out at a heat, at the  
 “ winding up of affairs at Cadiz, that the faith  
 “ of Great Britain was to be pledged, and that  
 “ her blood and treasure were to be forthcoming?  
 “ or was it only to the undoubted right of the  
 “ Spanish Nation to reform its own Government,  
 “ that the sanction of the King’s guarantee was  
 “ to be added? If such a guarantee were to be  
 “ any thing more than the mere affirmance of  
 “ an abstract proposition, against whom would  
 “ it have practically to operate? clearly against  
 “ Spaniards themselves: and in the endless strug-  
 “ gles which might be expected from the then  
 “ distracted state of parties in that Country,  
 “ against every party by turns?

“ Could any thing be more unbecoming than  
 “ the assumption of such a right by a foreign  
 “ Power? could any thing be more intolerable  
 “ to the Country with respect to which it was  
 “ assumed?”

For these reasons, Mr. Canning said that “ the  
 “ King declined accepting such a right for him-  
 “ self, nor would he acknowledge it in any other  
 “ Power.

“ The exercise of such a right would neces-

“sarily lead to an intermeddling with the affairs  
 “of the guaranteed State, such as to place it, in  
 “fact, at the mercy of the Power who gave the  
 “guarantee.

“Russia, in former times, guaranteed the  
 “Constitution of Poland.

“The result is known — and it was inevitable.  
 “The natural and necessary course of things, in  
 “such a case, is sure to overbear even the most  
 “sincere and studied abstinence from interposi-  
 “tion on the part of the guaranteeing Power.

“Such an arrangement was wholly incom-  
 “patible with the engagement by which the  
 “King and his Allies were bound to each other ;  
 “viz. to maintain the State of territorial posses-  
 “sion established at the Peace, and the rights of  
 “independent Nations.”

Long, however, before this answer reached Sir William à Court, the Government, which applied for the guarantee had ceased to exist. On the 6th of September, the extraordinary Cortes were convoked and held a Session. It was opened by a Speech delivered in the King's name, in which His Majesty was made to speak in terms of indignation of the liberty, which the French were desirous of bestowing on him. The day after the meeting, a Committee, appointed to enquire into the state of the Nation, made their Report, in which the conditions offered by the Duc d'Angoulême were described as so

humiliating that it was better to die than accept them. The Report was adopted by the Cortes, who gave the Government unlimited powers to take whatever measures it thought necessary for the defence of the Town. On the 20th, the French took the Fort of Santi Petri, the loss of which rendered a prolonged defence of the Island nearly impossible.

On the 23d the town was bombarded by their Fleet, and set on fire in several places; and almost at the same time, the preparations for a general assault were brought to a completion.

Every body in Cadiz then began to see the folly of any further resistance; every body began to mistrust his neighbour; and every body became anxious to secure an amnesty for the past, without a thought of what might occur, or what might be the fate of their unfortunate country, for the future.

No money, no resources were left to the Cortes; their naval and military commanders did not disguise the fact, that they had not at their command adequate means for making a resistance: but what was still worse, a general disaffection to the Constitutional cause began to show itself, not only in the regular army, but even in the militia; cries of "Viva el Rey absoluto," being so frequently heard among the troops, that it was evident that upon the first



attack, the greater part would have passed over to the enemy.

In this desperate extremity, with the knowledge of Ferdinand's character, the wisest course would have been to have treated with the Duc d'Angoulême, who would, at least, have taken care to fulfil the terms to which he might have consented to have agreed; but, unfortunately, some unlucky spirit broached the fanciful idea, that it would be more consistent with the character of a great nation, to throw itself upon the mercy of the King, than to bargain with the enemy at the gates. The idea was too truly Spanish not to take. The engagements to which the Duc d'Angoulême was still willing to accede, were entirely lost sight of; and after forcing the King's signature to a decree of amnesty (in which His Majesty was made to speak of the "*Enemy's Camp*" in a manner that clearly marked that he wrote under subjection), the Cortes and Government announced that he was free, and even facilitated his departure.

Accordingly, on the 1st of October, Ferdinand, accompanied by his family, left Cadiz, and arrived at Port St. Mary's, the head quarters of the commander of the invading army.

The liberation of the King put an end very shortly to all further resistance by the Consti-

tutionalists in other parts of the Peninsula. The fortresses in Catalonia were delivered up to the French, and Mina himself, who had so skilfully and so gloriously contributed to their defence, quitted his native land to seek refuge in England. The French were thus left in quiet possession of the whole of their conquest.

It may at first sight appear extraordinary that a form of Government, which in 1820 was established with little opposition, and amidst unequivocal marks of popular approbation, should in 1823 have found amongst the Spanish population only decided enemies, or lukewarm supporters.

But these phenomena are easily to be explained by a consideration of the state of things at the two respective periods of the establishment and the overthrow of the Constitutional Government. At the former period the majority of the nation, without doubt, were weary of Ferdinand's system of mismanagement. They saw that the nation was losing past redemption, its Colonies, the great source of its wealth and power; that all its great interests were depressed to a degree hitherto unexampled; and that personal security was that on which no man could rely. It was therefore felt, that hardly any change could be for the worse; and, consequently, the proposition for setting up a Representative form of Government was

opposed by none, and welcomed with joy by many. But no form of Government, much less one so imperfect as that which was then framed, could have at once restored to Spain any thing like prosperity, or eradicated, for many years, the evils, which many years had been consumed in planting. The expectations, therefore, of the people were disappointed at finding, that although their Government was changed, their condition was not ameliorated. But when, added to this, the resentment of so powerful a body of men, as those who compose the Spanish Priesthood, was roused against the Cortes, by the confiscation of the revenues of the Church, it is not to be wondered at that the Constitutional Government became an object of hatred to large classes of the population, and of indifference to those who were not better off under its rule than they had been under the despotism of Ferdinand. It must not, however, be supposed, that because the French were received as deliverers in each town into which they entered, that therefore there were none of the inhabitants who viewed them in a very different light. For, on such occasions, not only are the vanquished silenced, but it is in the very nature of things, that many of them would contribute to swell the shouts of welcome, in order that, by appearing to belong to the dominant party, they might escape the persecutions which, in such com-

motions, those who are triumphant are too apt to inflict upon their humbled adversaries.

While the Constitutional Government was thus being subverted in the Spanish portion of the Peninsula, by means of a foreign Army, a similar fate attended the same form of Government in Portugal, by means of the revolt of the native Army.

It will be remembered, that when it was first rumoured that the deliberations at the Congress of Verona were connected with the form of Government established in Spain, the Portuguese Government, which was of the same kind, naturally felt alarm lest it should, equally with its neighbour, become the object of attack by the Continental Powers.

It therefore endeavoured to persuade the British Government to guarantee the existence of the Constitutional Government by insinuating, that if Great Britain refused to do so, an offensive and defensive alliance would be entered into with Spain; thereby wishing it to be inferred that, since England was bound by treaty to assist Portugal in case she should be attacked, the chances of an attack would be much increased were she so to connect herself with Spain; and, consequently, that the chances of British assistance being called for would be augmented in the like proportion. When the proposition of guarantee was made to Mr. Canning, accom-

panied with the threat of the alliance with Spain, he lost no time in pointing out to the Portuguese Government, — First, That were England to guarantee the political institutions of Portugal, the so doing “ would be a direct “ infraction of that principle of non-interference “ in the internal concerns of other States, which “ She professed for Herself, and which it was “ obviously the interests of Portugal to see “ respected and maintained. Her treaty bound “ Her to consult the external safety of Portugal ; “ and not to examine, to challenge, or to champion Her internal institutions.

“ If England examined the new institutions “ of Portugal for the sake of deriving from “ them new motives for fulfilling old engagements, with what propriety could she prohibit “ other Powers from examining them for the purpose of drawing any other conclusion? It “ was enough to say, that such internal changes “ no way affected our engagements with Portugal, and that England felt as much bound “ to defend her under her altered Constitution, “ as under the antient Monarchy with which “ the alliance had been contracted.”

In the next place, Mr. Canning showed that there were no circumstances to justify such an alliance with Spain as the one proposed, and that the infallible tendency of it would be, to loosen the claim of Portugal upon Great Britain,

for that general aid and protection to which antient alliance, and long-existing friendship might entitle her upon an adequate emergency ; for it was only in the event of an unprovoked aggression upon her territory, that Portugal would have a claim upon British assistance ; and should She think proper to contract any new or special obligations, by which She should place herself at the call of another Power to act against a third, and should thereby incur the risk of an attack from that third Power, then England would be under no obligation to defend her against aggression, which would have been produced by her own misconduct. This argument of Mr. Canning contributed not a little to put an end to the contemplated treaty ; although it did not entirely extinguish the wish of the Portuguese Ministers to embroil their country with France. For when the speech of the King of France, at the opening of the Chambers, reached Lisbon, the Portuguese Chargé d'Affaires at Paris was directed to notify to the French Government, that his Court would consider an invasion of Spain to imply a declaration of war against Portugal.

To this communication the French Minister returned a dignified and temperate answer ; to the effect that the dispute between France and Spain was to be attributed to the positive inconveniences resulting to the former from the in-

ternal state of the latter kingdom ; that as these causes of dispute did not apply to Portugal, hostility, under such circumstances, on Her part would be an unprovoked aggression upon France; and that His Most Christian Majesty would not withdraw his diplomattick and commercial agents, whatever might be the measures, short of war, which the Portuguese Government might think proper to adopt.

The entry of the French Army into Spain was, notwithstanding, the signal for the departure of the Portuguese Chargé d'Affaires from Paris ; but so determined were the French Ministers to avoid doing any thing which could afford Portugal a pretext for commencing hostilities, that when the application for passports was received, an effort was made to induce M. Sampayo to suspend the execution of his orders, until he should have again referred to his Government ; while he was at the same time informed that the French Chargé d'Affaires would not be withdrawn from Lisbon, nor would the French Consuls in Portugal be ordered to quit that country in consequence of M. Sampayo's departure. The Portuguese Government, however, on hearing of the entry of the French Army in Spain, notified to the French Chargé d'Affaires the suspension of his diplomattick functions. To this notification an answer was returned, which produced from the Portuguese

Minister a reply, couched in very strong language, refusing to hold any further diplomatick intercourse with the French Chargé d'Affaires, who nevertheless addressed to that Minister a very moderate rejoinder, which was communicated to the Foreign Agents in Lisbon, in order that they might bear witness to the desire of the French Court not to give offence to the existing Government of Portugal.

The French Ministers were indeed resolved, that nothing short of being attacked, should involve them in a quarrel with Portugal: no declaration, therefore, of war, was made, nor was any act committed by France against Portugal, in consequence of the latter thus breaking off all diplomatick intercourse between them.

Throughout the whole affair indeed, the most scrupulous anxiety was continued to be evinced by the French Authorities to avoid a collision; and when Count Amarante, who, having raised in the province of Tras os Montes, the standard of rebellion against the Government of the Cortes, was defeated by the Constitutional Forces under General Régo, and driven, about the same period that the French crossed the Pyrenees, into the Spanish Territory, made an offer to the Duc d'Angoulême to combine his movements with those of the French Army, His Royal Highness declined the offer, stating, that all co-operation was impossible, as long as France continued at



peace with Portugal, and that he was determined not to lend himself to any measure which could interrupt the good understanding between the two Courts. Moreover, in consequence of General Régo having crossed the frontier in pursuit of Count Amarante, His Royal Highness caused it to be intimated to that General, that the French Government were determined to remain at peace with Portugal, and that General Régo would be considered as responsible for any act of hostility on his part, against the French Troops.

The French, however, were not much longer called upon to exercise their forbearance: for in spite of Amarante's defeat, discontent against the then existing Government in Portugal, began to make such rapid strides, that shortly after the French Army had reached Madrid, a complete revolution took place at Lisbon.

The manner in which this event was brought about, is as follows. The ordinary Cortes closed their sittings on the 31st of March; on the 15th of May the extraordinary Cortes assembled. On the 27th a whole Regiment of Infantry, which had left Lisbon to join General Régo, who had taken up a position in Tras os Montes, for the purpose of watching Count Amarante, were met by their quondam Colonel, who had a short time before been dismissed by the Government, and were induced by him to declare against the

**Constitution.** The regiment then proceeded to Villa Franca, where it found Don Miguel, who had secretly left the Capital to join them. The Prince immediately published a Proclamation, calling upon the nation to deliver the King. The news of Don Miguel's flight, and the revolt of the regiment reached the Cortes on the same day. A letter, from the Colonel of the regiment, addressed to General Sepulveda, the Governor of Lisbon, giving reasons for his conduct, was read at a meeting of that body. The General was called in and examined. He affirmed that the Troops in Lisbon were entirely in favour of the Constitution, and the Cortes invested him with full powers to preserve the peace of the Capital. A deputation from that assembly was named to wait upon the King, to congratulate him on his constancy, and to beg he would join his endeavours to those of the Cortes, to save his Country. He was likewise requested to dismiss his Ministers, who forthwith resigned, and another Administration was appointed.

The day after (the 28th), great numbers joined Don Miguel, and on the following day General Sepulveda, who had been playing a double part, left Lisbon to join the Prince, and was followed by the whole of the troops in the Capital, except the 18th Regiment. In the meanwhile the Cortes continued their sittings, and received a Report from the new Minister of Justice upon the

state of Publick Affairs, in which Report, he drew a most discouraging picture of the condition of the Capital, and Provinces. His assurance of the King's firmness was the only part of his report, which held out any hopes of the continuance of the Constitutional System. The "firmness" of the King was, however, the last quality which His Majesty possessed, on which the Cortes could confidently reckon. Faithful, as far as depended upon himself, to the oath which he had taken, there is no reason to believe that he was either privy to the defection of the troops, or was in any way instrumental in its encouragement.

But John VI. was not the Sovereign to stand alone, against a formidable Mutiny, in support of a system of Government, which he might have been willing to maintain, but for which he could not have entertained any strong feelings of partiality. When, therefore, the only regiment which remained faithful to the Constitution, determined to go over to Don Miguel, His Majesty resolved to accompany it, and to make common cause with his hitherto rebellious Son.

The Cortes met for the last time on the 2d of June. They declared, that being forsaken by the Executive Power, and held in a state of coercion by the Military, they should, without considering themselves dissolved, interrupt their sittings till again convened by the permanent

Deputation, and concluded with a protest against any change in the Constitution.

Before the King left Lisbon he published a Proclamation, declaring that he did not desire absolute power, and promising to grant a New Constitution “ which should secure personal “ safety, property, and employment duly ac- “ quired in any period of the actual Govern- “ ment.” On the 3d he dissolved the Cortes, who made no further attempt at resistance; and on the 5th he made his public entry into Lisbon, where he was received with acclamations by the inhabitants.

Don Miguel was made Generalissimo of the Armies, and the decree against the Queen, condemning her to be banished, because she had refused to swear fidelity to the Constitution, was revoked. A new Ministry was also appointed; at the head of which was M. de Pampluna, and the Marquis of Palmella was made Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Thus was the dissolution of the Constitutional Government effected, without any conflict, or excesses on either side.

The King being restored to unlimited authority, the Diplomatick Agents of France, and the other Continental Powers, once more returned to Lisbon : and in compliance with the expressed wish of His M. F. Majesty, Sir Edward Thornton was sent in the character of Minister Pleni-

potentiary, to replace Mr. Ward, who had acted as Chargé d'Affaires, ever since the year 1816.

The first acts of the King, after the change in the Government, manifested no vindictive feelings towards the Constitutional party; and notwithstanding that the Queen and Don Miguel, who had been chiefly instrumental in bringing about the Counter-Revolution, were adverse to the grant of any free institutions under any form, or modification whatsoever, the King, faithful to fulfil the promises which he had made to his people, about a fortnight after his return to the Capital, nominated a Commission, of which M. de Palmella was the President, to draw up a *Projet* of a Constitution.

Very different was the conduct of the King of Spain, after his liberation from Cadiz; which city was surrendered, without even the security of a real amnesty, for those by whom it had been defended. The consequence of this false step was, that the Duc d'Angoulême, not being possessed of any right whatever to interfere, the Spaniards were deprived of that support and protection which they would undoubtedly have derived from any engagements contracted with His Royal Highness; and Ferdinand was therefore free to act according to the dictates of his unfettered will; for His Majesty declared that he held himself in no wise bound by the decree which he signed the day on

which he quitted Cadiz, because at the time at which he affixed his name to it, he was coerced by the Constitutional Authorities.

The very day on which he was released from the power of the Cortes, he commenced his course of misrule: and although no victims, (with the exception of Riégo) were made to pay the forfeit of their lives, for their fidelity to a form of Government which he himself had sworn to uphold and to defend; yet every act and decree of the Monarch was calculated to exasperate, and to take away all feelings of security from those who had been in any way connected with the late Government, both as to their property, and their lives. The most conspicuous actors in the Constitutional System, had indeed, withdrawn themselves from their country; but since that system had endured for so long, that the great majority of the nation was committed to it in some way or other, there were numbers left to feel the effects of the Royal anger, as manifested in the decrees of Port St. Mary, and Xeres. By the first of these Decrees, all acts done by the Constitutional Government were declared null and void, and by the latter, all persons who had been in any way connected with the Cortes, were prohibited from approaching within five leagues of the route which the King was about to take in his way to Madrid, and, for

ever (!) from coming within fifteen leagues of the capital, so long as his Majesty should think proper there to fix his residence. Thus all were placed on the same level ; and the most violent of the *doctrinaires*, and the most moderate of the Constitutionalists, were left, without distinction, in the same state of doubt and anxiety, as to their future fate.

It was in vain that the French Authorities represented the impolicy of this line of conduct : Ferdinand, whom they had liberated, was as little disposed, as the Regency, which they had constituted, had been before him, to listen to their advice.

The Duc d'Angoulême, whose good sense and discretion in conducting the arduous task assigned to him, had been throughout remarkable, deplored, while he was unable to prevent, the impolitick conduct of the King : His Royal Highness, indeed, urged, in every possible way, the immediate publication of an amnesty, but his representations were disregarded ; and so displeased was he with the proceedings of Ferdinand that when he had his audience of leave, he refused the decorations tendered to himself and staff ; requesting His Catholick Majesty, as a more honourable mark of his royal favour, to allow the whole of the Grandees to return to Madrid who had signed the original address,

presented to His Royal Highness on his arrival in Spain: many of whom had been included in the proscriptive decrees.

The Duc left Madrid on the 5th of November, without waiting to be present at the publick entry of Ferdinand into his Capital, which took place on the 13th of the same month.

The Spanish Ministers whom the Regency had selected, had all been confirmed in their situations by one of the clauses in the Xeres decree, issued four days after the King had quitted Cadiz; they were all of the violent Apostolical party, and encouraged His Majesty in the violent measures which he adopted.

Don Victor Saez, the Foreign Minister, as soon as he had joined His Majesty, resumed his functions as Confessor; and to his influence over the Royal mind, was, in a great degree, attributed the delay, or refusal, to publish an amnesty, which the French Authorities and the Foreign Ambassadors all concurred in strenuously recommending.

Their continuance in power was not, however, of long duration, and about a fortnight after Ferdinand's return, they found themselves most suddenly and unexpectedly dismissed, and another Administration appointed in their places.

M. Casa Irujo was at the head of the new Ministry: but the Count Ofalia was the indi-



vidual on whose talents it chiefly depended for support. Its Members were all of the moderate party, and those who really entertained patriotick feelings, began to hope that better days were about to dawn upon their country.

But whatever good intentions might have been entertained by the new Ministers, the manner in which they had been brought into power, the little talent of which any of them could boast, and their want of money, all contributed to paralyze their efforts for the publick good. The Apostolical party were furious at the change, and the weakness of the Administration served to revive their courage, which the disgrace of their own party at first had shaken. The whole body of the Clergy, supported by the King's brother, Don Carlos, declared against the new Ministry, urged the necessity of severe measures, and demanded the re-establishment of the Inquisition, "a tribunal," which they described as "congenial to the manners of the People, "and only condemned by Foreigners actuated "by interested motives, or ignorant of the "country; a tribunal which had always been "the surest bulwark of the Altar and the "Throne."

The Ministers meanwhile were busily employed in endeavouring to arrange an amnesty, as the first step towards the re-establishment of order and peace; but their endeavours were

foiled by the fanatical and vindictive spirit of the individuals by whom the King was surrounded. The head of the Ministry was not, however, destined to live to continue the struggle. About a fortnight after his accession to office, he was struck with apoplexy, from which he never recovered. The Count Ofalia was nominated to succeed him.

The year was suffered to close without any amnesty being published; and the uncertainty which prevailed as to whether the King would, or would not acknowledge the bonds of the Cortes, by preventing the great capitalists from lending their money, reduced the Government to such straits, that the most pressing publick business was with difficulty carried on, and all attempts at establishing any regular system of Government were rendered utterly hopeless.

The Government was dependent for its safety on a foreign force, which, however, by a singular destiny, was much more frequently employed in restraining the excesses of the party which it came to support, against the party which it had overthrown, than in keeping down the struggles of the latter party, to regain their lost ascendancy; on the plea of doing which, its presence in the Peninsula was required.

Although France was the ostensible Power by whose agency the changes in the Spanish Government were effected, her Continental Allies

had neither looked on with indifference at her proceedings, nor had they abstained, as circumstances developed themselves, from tendering their advice.

In the early part of the Campaign, while the success of the French, and the fidelity of their Army seemed doubtful, the Emperors of Russia and Austria assembled Armies on the frontiers of their Dominions, ready to march in support of the French, should these last meet with any reverses on the other side of the Pyrenees; but when the unresisted advance of their Armies made their final success more than probable, the Ambassadors of the Allied Courts at Paris were unceasing in their representations to the French Ministers on no account to treat with, or in any way whatsoever to acknowledge the legitimacy of, the Constitutional Government.

On the other hand, the policy of Great Britain was to keep aloof as much as possible from all these discussions, and to preserve a strict neutrality; letting the French Ministers understand, that She was ready to be the medium of Negotiation between them and the Cortes, whenever the former should think proper to entitle themselves to it, by stating any definite conditions of Peace by which they would pledge themselves to abide, provided they were accepted by the latter.

But the French Ministers (as has been seen)

were unwilling to fetter themselves: and although they were anxious to induce the British Government to take some step which might have the appearance, at least, of its not wholly disapproving of the invasion of the Peninsula, yet they were unwilling to allow Great Britain to adopt any measures by which she might acquire a right to interfere afterwards in Spanish Affairs.

The same kind of feelings seemed apparently to actuate their conduct towards their Continental Allies, from whom they were desirous of obtaining all the support to be derived from their countenance; while, at the same time they were jealous lest any one of them should obtain a share in the influence, which they intended to establish for themselves, in the Spanish Councils, so soon as, through their labours, those Councils should again fall under the absolute direction of Ferdinand.

From the commencement to the termination of the Campaign, the grand object of the French Government was to get possession of the Spanish Monarch; that they might at once bring the War to a successful conclusion, and commence the task of governing Spain after their own ideas. To bring about, therefore, this result, they would have been content, before they passed the Ebro, to have negotiated with the Cortes as the legitimate Government of the Country. When they

found that the Cortes would not treat, but had removed with the King from Madrid to Seville, they were incessant in their suggestions to the British Cabinet to advise the Spaniards to set Ferdinand free; and were willing to sanction any plan for carrying him off by surprise, or facilitating his escape by treachery, to get him into their power; and when at last, from the reports which reached them of Cadiz being totally unprepared for a siege, and consequently that there was little chance of the King's being much longer kept out of their hands, they would not allow the Duc d'Angoulême to negotiate at all (except in undertaking for an amnesty) unless he had in his own custody the person of the King.

But Ferdinand was much less manageable than the French Ministers had expected; and would not relinquish the sweets of vengeance for the sake of showing gratitude to those to whom he was indebted for the power of retaliation. The French Authorities in fact were wholly unable to restrain him, even at the very moment when he first reached their head-quarters, and was surrounded by their Army; and still less influence did France for some time possess in the Spanish Councils, when her wishes were urged through the medium of her Ambassador, who, after the fall of Cadiz, had immediately taken up his residence at the Court of His Catholick Majesty.

The Diplomattick Agents of the Allied Courts, who had been accredited to the Regency at Madrid, had followed the example of their French Colleague. To the counteractions of these Ministers, the little influence possessed by the French Ambassador must in some degree be attributed.

The Sovereigns of the Alliance, although they had witnessed with delight the overthrow of the Constitutional system, and the triumph of Absolutism, yet did not view altogether without distrust the dispositions of the French Cabinet. They did not approve of the War having been converted by M. de Villèle from an European into a French War; neither did they like the idea (which the Government of the Most Christian King did not scruple to avow) of persuading the Spanish Monarch, when he should be set free, to grant a Constitution to his people.

The Ministers, therefore, of Russia, Prussia, and Austria, when they arrived at Seville, thwarted, rather than co-operated with, the French Ambassador.

They all three held extreme Royalist opinions, and were adverse to any sacrifice of the principles of Legitimacy, at whatever cost those principles were to be maintained. And since their counsels were therefore more congenial to the disposition of Ferdinand and his advisers, than were those of the French Ambassador, M. de

Talaru, who recommended moderation and mercy, their advice was listened to, whilst that of the latter was disregarded. In one point, however, all the four were agreed—and that point was, that the British Minister ought not to be allowed to acquire any preponderating influence.

Such was the state of affairs, when Sir William à Court arrived at Seville from Gibraltar ; which place he quitted so soon as the intelligence reached him, that the King of Spain was no longer residing within the walls of a besieged and blockaded city.

On Sir William's first arrival a great inclination was manifested by the Spanish Government to dispute his right to be received as British Minister, without the delivery of fresh credentials ; he, however, insisted, since he was accredited personally to the King, and not to the Cortes, and since the change of Government had made no difference in the person of the Sovereign, that there was no necessity for him to be re-accredited : and he distinctly declared, that, if he were not immediately received in the plenitude of his rights as British Minister, he would directly leave Seville, and proceed to Madrid, on his way to the frontiers, to await the orders of his Government.

The evil consequences which would necessarily have resulted to the newly-restored Govern-

ment of Spain, from the departure of the British Minister, were too obvious not to be seen by those, of whom it was composed, as well as those by whose advice it was acting. The threat, therefore, decided the point, and Sir William received the regular invitation, as British Minister, to attend the circle at Court on the King's birthday, on which occasion he accordingly attended.

The difficulty about receiving him had arisen from the determination of Ferdinand, if possible, to adhere to the principle laid down in the decree which he had issued upon the day on which he reached Port St. Mary's, that every act performed under the Constitutional Government was to be considered as null and void; but if this were a reason for Ferdinand to desire that the British Minister should be afresh accredited to him, it afforded an equally strong reason on the other side why the British Minister should not listen to a proposal, the compliance of which would have been a sort of acknowledgment, on his part, of the nullity of past acts; the effect of making which acknowledgment would have been to have cancelled the Convention concluded between England, and Spain, for the adjustment of the commercial claims of the respective countries.

Sir William, therefore, did not content himself with merely refusing his consent to an act which indirectly would have called in question



the validity of that Convention ; for no sooner did he learn that all the acts of the Constitutional Government, of every class and description, without any exception being made in favour of diplomattick transactions, had been annulled by the Port St. Mary decree, than he requested explanations from the Foreign Secretary, Don Victor Saez, touching the fulfilment of the Convention.

No difficulties were made by the Spanish Government in confirming it ; and, disagreeable as it must necessarily have been to Ferdinand and his Ministers to have made this exception to their rules, especially in favour of a Power that had evinced no friendly feelings towards the system of absolute Government, yet they were too well aware of the firmness of the British Cabinet to run the risk of provoking its displeasure, by refusing to hold themselves bound by a Treaty which Ferdinand himself had ratified, although in the character of a Constitutional King. The readiness of His Catholick Majesty to hold himself bound by the Convention was communicated in a note from Don Victor Saez to the British Minister, before the Court quitted Seville for Madrid.

At Madrid the Diplomattick Body was reinforced by M. Pozzo di Borgo, who had been sent by the Russian Court to congratulate the King on his deliverance.

This distinguished diplomatist, with all his dislike to any measures bordering upon liberal, was yet sufficiently wise in his generation to see, that absolute Monarchies would have but little chance of being suffered to exist, if all those by whom they were administered should imitate the example of Ferdinand. His Excellency was, therefore, an advocate for milder measures; and finding that no impression could be made on the King, he employed himself in endeavouring to remove the Ministry, which existed when the King first arrived in his Capital, and to establish another, composed of individuals holding more moderate opinions.

Whether, however, he would have succeeded in his endeavours if it had not been for the absolute bankruptcy of the Government, it is difficult to determine; but it was generally believed that he managed to work upon the King's mind by some pecuniary temptations of no very creditable nature. Certain it is that to the exertions of M. Pozzo di Borgo was owing the dismissal of the Administration of the Duc del Infantado and Don Victor Saez, and the appointment of that of M. Casa Irujo and the Count Ofalia.

The French Ambassador had little share in bringing about the change, although he did not hesitate to express his conviction, that the offices of the King's Confessor, and Secretary of State, were wholly incompatible with each other.

As for the British Minister, he remained a passive spectator of all the intrigues that were being carried on, contenting himself with merely transacting the ordinary business of his mission, and discussing with the Spanish Ministers such matters of external policy, as mutually affected the two countries.

Amongst these latter, the state of Spanish America was of course included; but all that relates to this important subject must be deferred to the next Chapter.

As for Spain Herself, if Her condition were deplorable at the commencement of this year \*, it certainly was not improved at its conclusion. Defective as the Constitutional Government undoubtedly was, and administered by individuals, whose conduct rather tended to aggravate than to mitigate those defects, it was still essentially Spanish, and was not under Foreign dictation. Its aim, therefore, must have been to benefit some class or other of Spaniards, and whether that class was or was not, less numerous, and less deserving than others, still the interests of Spaniards were those which the Government consulted. The blemishes in the Constitution would probably have worked their own cure. Already they had arrayed against it a majority of the Nation; and publick opinion could not have failed in producing its effect upon the publick

Councils. The next election of the Cortes would have afforded the opportunity. Modifications might then have been introduced, whereby the form of Government might have been rendered more congenial to the national feelings, and an era of prosperity might have arisen to which Spain had been too long a stranger. But the restoration of the old Despotism, unmitigated, and unchanged, took away this single chance of internal regeneration.

Measures of state, no longer originated with Spaniards, and every act of the Government might be traced to foreign influence, or intrigue.

Was a Convention to be ratified or a Minister to be received, the opinions of the Agents of Foreign Powers decided the question.

Was a Ministry overthrown, and another appointed, it was not because the publick voice demanded a change, or the caprice of the Sovereign willed it, but because the members of the one that fell, were not sufficiently yielding to the views of the Russian Ambassador, and greater pliability was expected from their Successors.

In short, the Spanish Government no longer acted to promote the welfare of any description of Spaniards, but either to gratify the vindictive feelings of Ferdinand, or to further the views of the Representative of some foreign Potentate.

To complete the picture of national degradation, the constituted authorities did not ad-

minister justice ; the country was overrun with Banditti ; and neither life nor property were secure against the attacks of these lawful, and lawless depredators.

Such was the condition of Spain at the end of 1823, in the course of which year her newly established institutions had been overthrown by foreign interference.

Early in the succeeding year a treaty was signed between France and Spain, by which the former agreed, to keep for the following six months in Spain, an army consisting of 45,000 men, who were to be dispersed to garrison the principal Fortresses in Spain, and were to have their head quarters at Madrid.

Of the policy of this country preserving neutrality in the contest between France and Spain, so much has already been said in justification, that it would be needless to say more upon the subject, were it not, that on the first day of the session of 1824, the soundness of that policy was again indirectly called in question : not, indeed, by condemning the motives which had dictated it, but by lamenting the occurrences which had taken place contemporaneously with an adherence to it.

The decided manner in which the majority of the Spanish Population had declared against the Constitution was, in the opinion of the Ministers, one of the strongest proofs of their wisdom in

having abstained from recommending to their Country to undertake the defence of institutions; which the greater part of those who professed them, neither desired to preserve, nor knew how to value. This sentiment was accordingly expressed in the King's Speech at the opening of Parliament, in which it was said, that, "anxiously  
 " as His Majesty deprecated the commence-  
 " ment of the war in Spain, he was every day  
 " more satisfied, that in the strict neutrality  
 " which he had determined to observe in that  
 " contest, he best consulted the true interests of  
 " his people."

To this way of mentioning the recent events in Spain, objections were raised in both Houses, because there was no expression " of regret at  
 " the manner in which the war had terminated,  
 " although its origin was deprecated : " and, because the position in which Great Britain and Europe were placed, by France being in possession of Spain, afforded no grounds for congratulations; but, on the contrary, " was fraught  
 " with inevitably disastrous consequences."

But this posture of affairs was neither set forth in the King's Speech, nor described by his Ministers, as subject-matter of exultation. On the contrary, it was felt by them to be one of the greatest difficulty and embarrassment; and was one which they had publicly declared, it would not be for the interests of this country

permanently to tolerate ; but what they did consider matter of congratulation was, that they had husbanded the resources of the Country, and concentrated its power, instead of having wasted either the one or the other, by engaging in a war, in which our only allies would have been a minority of the People of the Peninsula, and in which we should have had ranged against us the majority of that same people, together with all the great Powers of Europe. And whether, it may be asked, were we more likely to have prevented France from establishing a lasting footing in Spain, by committing ourselves in hostilities when the point at issue would necessarily have been the merits or demerits of the Constitutional System, to effect the overthrow of which the Continental Powers were desirous ; or, by waiting until that question was gone by, and we could declare war upon the principle of hindering France from acquiring permanent territorial aggrandizement ?

In the one case, all Europe would have been combined against us. In the other, our Allies were bound by treaty to act with us, the fulfilment of which treaty on their parts would in no wise have compromised their principles.

The Ministers, therefore, held, that in the policy which had been pursued, the true interests of the country had been consulted. And, if this were the case, (and it is remarkable that,

with all the attempts then made to discredit that policy, it was no longer denied,) then there can be no doubt that there was good cause for joy and congratulation that, out of two evils, the Government had had the sagacity to choose the least.

With regard to the absence of any expressions of sorrow, it may be observed, that it would have been very undignified to have given utterance to sentiments of regret, at a state of things, to which (however much we might lament it) we had no intention of applying any immediate and ostensible remedy.

In the next debate which took place \* on the affairs of Spain, the policy of neutrality was not impugned, but merely the mode of its execution. Lord Nugent led the attack, which was wholly directed against the conduct of Sir William à Court, for which his Lordship correctly held that Minister to be responsible, or otherwise, according as it emanated from his own discretion, or was in conformity with the instructions of his Government.

The principal charges which Lord Nugent urged against Sir William, and indeed the only ones which had their foundation in fact, (for the others were mere hearsay stories for which there cannot be said to have been any real foundation,) were, 1st, That he had abstained from following the Regency set up by the Cortes,

February 17. 1824.



and had remained at Seville after the King had been declared unfit to reign; 2dly, That he kept studiously aloof from "co-operating" with the Constitutional Government; and, lastly, That instead of going to Cadiz, he went to Gibraltar, and remained there. With respect to the first of these charges, it must be remembered that Sir William à Court was accredited to King Ferdinand, and not to a Regency; and that had he acknowledged the Regency established by the Cortes against the will of Ferdinand, it would have been a gross breach of neutrality towards the Regency which was constituted at Madrid, without doubt in consonance with His Catholic Majesty's wishes. So long as Ferdinand was ostensibly in possession of the Government, so long it was the duty of the British Minister to sanction that Government by his presence; but when a Regency was appointed in spite of the King, to whom Sir William was accredited, and not even possessing so much *de facto* power over the country, as its rival Regency, it would have been, at the least, an act of great partiality to have recognised the authority of either one, to the prejudice of the other.

With regard to Sir William's remaining at Seville, it was undoubtedly true that the Royalists there did endeavour to make him an instrument in their hands; but it is equally true, as has been already stated, that he refused to be-

come their instrument, and that they failed in so making use of him.

With regard to the second charge, that he studiously kept aloof from "co-operating" with the Constitutional Government, it must be obvious to every one, that had Sir William "co-operated" with that Government other than as a mediator, he would have violated every principle of neutrality.

With regard to the last charge, viz. that he did not go to Cadiz, the sole reason which prevented his so doing was, that Cadiz was at the time when he had to decide upon his going, blockaded and besieged by sea and land, and that it was impossible but that the residence of a Minister of a neutral Power in a town so circumstanced, would have created misunderstandings with the blockading Belligerent, by giving rise to questions as to his rights and privileges; "questions of which the usually admitted authorities in matters of international law had never contemplated the occurrence; and for the decision of which history afforded no practical example." For instance, "would the Minister so situated have a right of unlimited communication with his Court? Ought he to direct the vessel which he might employ to submit to search, or to resist it?" "These and other questions of like difficulty must have arisen had Sir William placed himself in a

“ situation so new and anomalous ; and questions  
 “ between nations, which are not referable to  
 “ preconcerted agreements, or to settled prin-  
 “ ciples and acknowledged law, no power but  
 “ the sword can decide.”

Sir William, therefore, surely judged wisely when he resolved to prevent such complications from arising; for, as Mr. Canning observed, in approving Sir William's resolution, “ if England had been  
 “ disposed to go to war with France in behalf  
 “ of Spain, she would have done so openly, and  
 “ either on the merits of the cause, or in vindication of some intelligible interest. But after  
 “ professing and maintaining a perfect and  
 “ scrupulous neutrality throughout the contest,  
 “ to have been betrayed, at the close of it, into  
 “ hostilities, through an uncalled for, and un-  
 “ profitable discussion upon abstract points of  
 “ international jurisprudence, would have been  
 “ a weakness unworthy of any Government.”

Lord Nugent concluded by moving for,  
 “ Copies of all the correspondence between Sir  
 “ William à Court and his Government, and  
 “ Sir William and the Constitutional Govern-  
 “ ment of Spain, from the period of the entrance  
 “ of the French into Spain up to the surrender  
 “ of Cadiz.”

The whole of the Noble Lord's speech was  
 criminatory of Sir William à Court, and, through  
 Sir William, of the Government.

Mr. Canning rose immediately after the question had been put by the Chair, to take all the blame of that conduct, if blameable it were, upon himself and his Colleagues; and to declare, that they were ready to sustain and justify it. In Mr. Canning's opinion, indeed, it was impossible for any man to have conducted himself with greater ability, discretion, and impartiality than Sir William à Court had done in the very difficult and delicate circumstances in which he was placed; and it is but fair to state, that the services which that Minister rendered, and the talents which he displayed, then in Spain, and subsequently in Portugal, obtained for him the very highest place in Mr. Canning's estimation. "I cannot charge Sir William à Court," said Mr. Canning near the close of their official connection, "with one imperfect exercise of his discretion, during the course of the most difficult transactions, in which ever Foreign Minister was engaged."

Mr. Sturges Bourne, in a speech of great ability, defended Sir William, and concluded by moving an amendment, expressive of the opinion of the House, that "under circumstances of peculiar difficulty, the neutrality of this Country had been scrupulously, and inviolably maintained."

None of Lord Nugent's party rising to support him, his Lordship replied; after which the

House divided, and the amendment was carried by a majority of 171 to 30.

Notwithstanding that the effect of this motion was thus to obtain from the House of Commons a vote, praising the Ministers for their conduct, (a benefit which there would have been no excuse for conferring upon them, had not an attempt been made to inculcate their proceedings,) yet, exactly on the same day of the following month, after the tocsin of preparation had long been sounded, Lord John Russell brought forward a motion to address the Throne for "Copies or extracts of any communications that had been received from the Government of France respecting the evacuation of Spain by the French Army."

In the beginning of his speech, Lord John disclaimed having "any intention of fixing any blame upon the Government for the policy which it had pursued respecting Spain." His object being, as he said, simply "to learn from the King's Ministers what was the policy of the Country;" or, in other words, his object was, as Mr. Canning described it, similar to Lord Nugent's; viz. to discredit the Ministers, by selecting for animadversion "particular parts of the transactions with Spain, in which it was thought blame, up to a certain point, might be fixed upon the Government, without attacking the general vote of approbation"

which the Houses of Parliament had passed in the preceding Session, and the House of Commons had confirmed in the one which succeeded it. The particular point selected for attack in this instance was, that Government were not sufficiently on their guard against the designs of France, and had not taken sufficient securities against the permanent occupation of the Peninsula by French Troops.

Sir Robert Wilson followed Lord John in support of the motion, and concluded his speech with a defence of himself against the indignities which the Allied Sovereigns had put upon him, by depriving him of the various orders with which his services had been rewarded at their hands. His speech produced a most favourable impression, with regard to himself, upon the minds of all who heard him.

Mr. Littleton defended the Government; and, following Mr. Sturges Bourne's example on Lord Nugent's motion, concluded by moving as an amendment, that "this House, being satisfied of the firmness and sound policy which " had guided His Majesty's Councils in respect " to the late hostilities between France and " Spain; and considering the several conditions " with which His Majesty's declaration of neutrality in that contest was qualified, sees " nothing in the present circumstances that calls " upon the House to express any apprehension

“ of a permanent military occupation of the  
 “ Spanish territory by France.”

The amendment was seconded by Mr. Gooch ; and Mr. Canning, having waited till the very last moment for some of the opposition members to rise, rose, and expressed his surprise, that “ a motion brought forward after such immense “ preparation, and a motion, to the effective “ prosecution of which, one other hapless motion had already been sacrificed, was itself in “ its turn to be abandoned by all the accustomed “ supporters of the noble mover.” He said that the motion was only one “ of a series in which “ an attempt had been made to take away some- “ thing from the recorded approbation of the “ House of the conduct of Government ;” and then, having alluded to the utter discomfiture of the former efforts to throw blame upon the Government, he went on to say, that “ it was impossible to view the Noble Lord’s proposition “ singly ; that his proposition was not that it “ was contrary to the interests of this Country “ that France should remain in possession of “ Spain—for that was a proposition that no one “ would contradict”—but the Noble Lord’s argument went to prove, that the intentions of France to retain possession of Spain were so manifest, or, at least, so ill concealed, that the Government was not entitled to confidence ; and, therefore, that it became necessary for Par-

liament to interfere, and no longer to trust to the Ministers alone for preventing the accomplishment of those intentions. Mr. Canning met this argument, by saying, that "in the quarrel between France and Spain, this Country had qualified her neutrality with three conditions." That with the first two, viz. that Portugal should not be attacked, and that there should be no interference with Spanish America, France had strictly complied; that, therefore, there was fair ground for presuming, that she would not violate the third; and that, as far as then appeared, no such design was entertained by her. That some kind of occupation of Spain by French Troops was always contemplated by the British Government, if the French were successful, was proved by the fact, that the "*permanency*" of the occupation, not the occupation itself, was that against which the British Government had thought it necessary to protest. That occupation had then only lasted six months. The troops had conducted themselves in a most exemplary manner; and such was the state of Spain, that if the question were put to him (Mr. Canning) "whether they should march out at once, or should not, it would be quite beyond his power to say that they should. For, by a strange course of events, their whole situation, and business in Spain, had become changed. They had gone into the country to



“defend the fanatical Party against the Constitutionalists, and now they were actually interfering for the Constitutional party with the Fanaticks. How long that system was to last he did not know ; but he entertained the most decided conviction, that whenever the time came that Spain might be left to herself with safety, France would be as much pleased to withdraw her Troops, as England could be to see her evacuate the country.”

Mr. Canning then went on to explain the difficulties in which the British Government had been placed with regard to their neutrality, in consequence of two Members of Parliament, Lord Nugent, and Sir Robert Wilson, having gone to Spain to assist the Constitutionalists, in direct contravention of the policy of their country — and having produced a good-humoured laugh at the expense of Lord Nugent, he concluded by saying, that “he hoped the House would do the Government the justice to say openly to the Country, that, as they had nothing to allege against its past conduct, so they still held undiminished confidence in it for the future.”

After a few observations, in reply, from Sir James Mackintosh, and Lord John Russell, the amendment was carried without a division.

After this debate the subject was allowed to drop : the Opposition finding, that each motion

of censure which they submitted, was invariably “ converted into a regular panegyrick on “ the Government.”

Indeed, from this time forth they were so well satisfied with the whole course of our foreign policy, that they never mentioned it, except to praise it; or to endeavour to appropriate to themselves some share of its merits.

It has been thought better to give the account of these debates before concluding this chapter, in order that all which relates to the French Invasion of Spain may be brought consecutively under the consideration of the reader.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the early part of this work it was stated that the grand object of Mr. Canning’s policy was to promote the interests of Great Britain, and by so doing, to contribute to the “ prosperity of surrounding Nations.” It was likewise stated that at the time when he assumed the direction of our Foreign Affairs, Great Britain did not possess that share of influence amongst the other Powers of Europe to which She was so justly entitled by Her rank and station: and further, that at that time the world was threatened with a danger of the most alarming nature, from an universal collision between the supporters of Ultra-monarchical, and the advocates of Revolutionary doctrines.

The restoration of England to her proper position, and the dispersion of the imminent danger to which mankind would have been exposed by so tremendous a conflict, were the effects which Mr. Canning predestined should result from his measures ; and the principle by which he determined that those measures should be guided, in order to be productive of such effects, was, that “ *England should hold the balance, not only between contending nations, but between conflicting principles,*” favouring, however, in order to preserve the equilibrium, the Liberal scale, because the Anti-liberal scale, at that time, preponderated.

“ If things were to be prevented from going “ to extremities,” said he, “ it must be by Great Britain keeping a distinct middle ground, staying the plague both ways.”

Mr. Canning, therefore, may be said to have reduced to a “ system ” the Foreign Policy of this Country — that is, to have conceived a scheme of Policy, regulated by fixed principles of action, and, operating to produce, definite, and foreseen results : and since, from the peace to the time when he accepted office, Great Britain, by the countenance which she had given to the Holy Alliance, had sided with Legitimacy, it is strictly correct to say, that Mr. Canning changed the whole tenour of our Foreign Policy ; and in

ceasing to encourage Ultra-monarchical tenets, adopted a new "system" of his own.

We have not yet arrived at a period of this history, when the desired results were effected; but the following remarks are here introduced, for the sake of tracing the gradual workings of the "system," in the progress of its development; and of showing that, each and all of Mr. Canning's measures, whether with respect to the Peninsula, or to the other great Powers of Europe, were referable to the same unchanging motives, and were no temporary expedients, whose nature and tendency were liable to be altered by the varying circumstances of the moment. •

With respect to Spain then, let the reader recall to his mind the transactions at Verona. There, there were two out of the four Great Powers of the Continent, desirous of commencing hostilities with that Country, for the purpose of overturning its Government, because its free institutions had been extorted by a long suffering, but at last resisting, Nation, from the worst of Kings. The remaining two (although some motives of policy peculiar to themselves prescribed a different course), would yet have been ready, from their common feeling of hatred to Constitutional Forms of Government, to have met the views of their Allies, and would have been content to have witnessed, in support of the

Monarchical principle, the lighting up in Europe of a new war, a war of principle, of all wars the most to be deprecated.

Here then, were the supporters of Monarchy about to bring themselves into immediate conflict with the advocates of Revolution. What then was the conduct of Great Britain? Did she throw her weight into either scale, either by admitting that the state of Spain justified the interference, or by declaring, that if the interference were persisted in, she should join those against whom it was to be directed? No, she contented herself with stating, that "she would not be a party" to such a scheme; and with openly denying the right of the Allies to carry it into execution. The effect of this language was the prevention of any corporate declaration of the Allied Powers against Spain; although it did not prevent sufficient encouragement being given to France to do that *singly*, upon doing which *jointly*, the Alliance did not care to venture. At Verona, therefore, a triumph was obtained by neither side, although the frustration of the combined designs of the Great Powers against Spain, served to strengthen the Liberal cause.

Again, when after the Congress, France trumped up grievances against Spain, as a pretence for war, the English Ministers urged her to abandon her purpose by every persuasive

argument ; and both to France herself directly, and to the British Parliament publicly, they condemned the principles by which she sought to justify her hostilities.

But here again the English Ministers would not commit their Country to the cause of Revolution ; and instead of encouraging Spain to resist, they did all in their power, by friendly counsel, to induce her to adopt certain modifications of her Constitution, by which they might have been enabled to bring about a *compromise* between Her and France.

The Spaniards, however, being too obstinate to compromise, the French army entered Spain ; and strict neutrality between the contending Nations, was the course which Great Britain determined to pursue. But the conflict was not one of Nations only, but principles ; and it was in the power of the English Government, by taking certain steps, equally easy to justify, to have given a triumph, at least of principle, to either party : but the so doing would have been at variance with Mr. Canning's " system " of policy.

What then was the spirit and purport of the instructions given to Sir William à Court ? Why, that since he was accredited to the King of Spain, he was to remain with His Majesty, so long as His Majesty even " apparently," possessed the reins of Government. That it was not

because the British Government might believe that " Ferdinand preferred being an absolute  
 " King, to the enjoying any, the most extensive  
 " prerogatives, under any, the most perfect of  
 " Constitutions, that therefore, while he was  
 " ostensibly King, they were to assume that he  
 " was a prisoner. There would be no end,"  
 said Mr. Canning, " of uncertainties, and inter-  
 " ferences, if we were to take upon ourselves to  
 " enquire into the degree of freedom and con-  
 " straint, under which all the Sovereigns of  
 " Europe might execute their functions; espe-  
 " cially those amongst them, who, having con-  
 " curred avowedly in the limitation of their  
 " power, were nevertheless notoriously bent  
 " upon resuming the concessions which they  
 " had made.

" Into such an enquiry, no Constitutional Go-  
 " vernment could enter. What should we have  
 " thought of an interference from Foreign Eu-  
 " rope when King John granted Magna Charta?  
 " or of an interposition in the quarrel between  
 " Charles I. and his Parliament? In either of  
 " these cases, or any such case, the business of  
 " Foreign Powers is with the King, who, till he  
 " is actually deposed, represents the nation at  
 " which he is the head.

" This was the principle acted upon by Eng-  
 " land at the French Revolution; for the British  
 " Ambassador was not withdrawn from Paris,

“ till after the *déchéance* of the King had extinguished the Power to which he had been accredited.”

Although, therefore, Sir William à Court was not ignorant that Ferdinand quitted Madrid for Seville against his will, he did not, on that account, think himself authorised to withdraw from his attendance on the Royal person. When, however, by the proceedings at Seville, the King's authority was for a time suspended, Sir William “ would not sanction by his presence “ the measure which had been adopted.” Had he done so, he would have flung the weight and authority of his Government into the Revolutionary scale.

But on the other hand, Mr. Canning did not, as he might have done, had he wished to throw that weight and authority into the opposite scale, notify to the Spanish Minister in London the discontinuance of his functions; nor did he instruct Sir William à Court not to rejoin the King, in case His Majesty should resume his authority, and invite the British Minister to his Court: but a discretionary power was given to him to accept the invitation or not, according as the circumstances of the moment might in his opinion, make it expedient, or inexpedient for him so to do.

In the single case of the King himself requesting Sir William to repair to Cadiz, as a pro-



tection to his person from violence, he was at all hazards to obey the Royal summons.

When the time arrived for Sir William to decide the question, no such request had been made by Ferdinand ; moreover, Cadiz was blockaded : Sir William, therefore, prudently determined not to place himself within its walls.

Nevertheless he did not abstain from giving to the Cortes all the assistance in his power to bring about an accommodation with the French authorities, and to save the Constitutionals from the consequences of an unconditional surrender.

It was from no fault of Sir William's that his exertions were unsuccessful.

By the King's ceasing to reside in a blockaded city, the only obstacle to the return of Sir William to the Spanish Court was removed. He therefore immediately rejoined His Most Catholic Majesty ; but when an attempt was made to commit the British Minister to an admission of the illegality of the Constitutional Government, by requiring of him that he should be furnished with fresh credentials, because his former ones had been received by Ferdinand during the existence of the Constitutional System, he at once scouted the idea of such a purification being necessary, and compelled the Spanish Monarch to acknowledge the sufficiency of the credentials which had already been presented. Neither would he allow the Con-

vention between Great Britain and Spain to be considered as void; and Ferdinand was once more compelled to admit the validity of an act, done by himself in the hateful character of Constitutional King.

Thus, in every measure, was this principle of holding the balance to be traced. The refusal of Sir William à Court to sanction by his presence the Regency of the Cortes, might at first sight appear to be a measure in favour of legitimacy; but it was counteracted by the fact, that the British Minister did not refuse, on account of the royal functions of the King having been suspended, from afterwards sanctioning, when His Majesty resumed them, the Constitutional Government by his presence, but on account of the peculiar circumstances in which the city, where it was established, was placed.

The return of the British Minister to Ferdinand after his release might have seemed to favour the cause of Absolutism; but such apparent favour was more than outweighed by his insisting on the admission by Ferdinand, that he was bound by an act done, and an agreement made by himself, when Head of the Government of the Cortes.

It was this same principle that induced Mr. Canning, when he received a letter from Don Victor Saez, the Secretary of State appointed by the Regency, established at Madrid by the

Duc d'Angoulême, purposely and openly to decline to acknowledge Don Victor as Secretary of State, or the Regency as the legitimate Government of Spain, as well as to forbid the British Ambassador at Paris to be present, at any rejoicings given in celebration of the French successes in the Peninsula.

But it was not only in his policy in Spain that this principle was in operation. The result of the contest in that country (which terminated in October 1823) caused great exultation to the Apostolical Party throughout Europe. The fact of the establishment of despotism by the means of Foreign interference, on the ruins of free institutions (Great Britain remaining a passive spectator), was manifest to all the world; while the nature of the British Diplomatick Transactions presented a much less striking feature, to attract the general attention of the Continental Nations. Mr. Canning, therefore, thought that a publick exposition of the views of England, with regard to Spain and France, would be necessary as a counterpoise to the successes of the latter, in order that the world might be assured that “if England had taken a neutral  
 “position in the Spanish question, it was one  
 “that she had chosen from a just regard for her  
 “own interests, and not because she was unpre-  
 “pared for war, or still less in compliance with

“ Foreign dictation, or in enmity with national  
“ freedom.”

The opportunity offered itself for this exposition very shortly after the time when the French entered Cadiz. On the occasion of the presentation to him of the freedom<sup>\*</sup> of the Borough of Plymouth, when, after having shown that the internal feuds by which Spain was divided more than justified England for not having “ Quixotically ” mingled in the “ contest,” he observed, “ Let it not, however, be said that “ we cultivate peace either because we fear, or “ because we are unprepared for war ; on the “ contrary, if eight months ago the Government “ did not hesitate to proclaim that the country “ was prepared for war, if war should be unfortunately necessary, every month that has since “ passed, has but made us so much the more “ capable of exertion.

“ The resources created by peace, are the “ means of war. In cherishing these resources, “ we but accumulate those means.

“ Our present repose is no more a proof of “ inability to act, than the state of inertness and “ inactivity in which I have seen those mighty “ masses that float in the waters above your town, “ is a proof that they are devoid of strength,

\* At the time this Speech was made, Parliament was not to meet for upwards of three months.

“and incapable of being fitted out for action.  
 “You well know, Gentlemen, how soon one  
 “of those stupendous masses, now reposing on  
 “their shadows in perfect stillness, — how soon,  
 “upon any call of patriotism or of necessity, it  
 “would assume the likeness of an animated  
 “thing, instinct with life and motion, — how soon  
 “it would ruffle, as it were, its swelling plumage ;  
 “how quickly it would put forth its scattered  
 “elements of strength, and awaken its dormant  
 “thunder. Such as is one of these magnificent  
 “machines, when springing from inaction into a  
 “display of its might ; such is England Herself,  
 “while apparently passive and motionless, she  
 “silently concentrates the power to be put forth  
 “on an adequate occasion. But, God forbid that  
 “that occasion should arise.”

England, then, was declared by her Foreign  
 Minister to be possessed of the *power* of going  
 to war, should an “adequate occasion arise :”  
 and was not this declaration a warning to the  
 Governments of Foreign Europe to take care  
 that they did not make that “occasion” which  
 would be adequate to call forth the dormant  
 vengeance of Britain ? But in taking care  
 that the Continental Powers should not be  
 permitted to think that he was in his heart an  
 admirer of those ultra principles, which they  
 professed, he likewise took care that they should  
 not represent him as a friend of democracy ;

since, failing the consolation to be derived from making out that he was, in secret, an Apostolical, they next preferred to fix upon him the odium of being a Revolutionist. Mr. Canning, however, was vehement in declaring that he was no "lover of Revolutions: he had passed," he said, "near thirty years of his life in fighting "for old institutions. But then it ought not to "be forgotten that, in resisting the French Revolution, in all its stages, from the Convention "to Buonaparte, he had advocated resistance to "the spirit of change to be sure; but resistance, also, to the spirit of foreign domination. "So long as these two spirits were leagued, the "resistance to one animated that to the other; "but if they were to be separated, or, still "worse, arrayed against each other, the most "strenuous and most consistent anti-revolutionist "might well hesitate which part to choose."

Mr. Canning's principles were essentially Monarchical. Abstractedly he preferred Monarchy to any other form of Government; and he was not in any way hostile to "Absolute Monarchy "in that part of Europe where it continued to "flourish. He had no objection to its continuing to flourish where it was the growth of the "soil, and where it contributed to the happiness "or to the tranquillity of a people. He would "not less readily have denounced any attempt "to invade the Austrian Dominions, for the

“ purpose of overthrowing the Austrian Mo-  
 “ narchy, than he did the invasion of Spain for  
 “ abolishing the Spanish Constitution; but he  
 “ did think it very inadvisable (as the Holy Alli-  
 “ ance seemed resolved to do) to force into con-  
 “ flict the abstract principles of Monarchy, and  
 “ Democracy. He held it to be the business of  
 “ England to preserve, so far as might be, the  
 “ peace of the world, and the independence of  
 “ the several nations which compose it. He  
 “ did not think (as the Holy Alliance seemed  
 “ to think) that there was no security for peace  
 “ between nations, unless every nation was at  
 “ peace within itself; or that Absolute Mo-  
 “ narchy was the charm on which such internal  
 “ tranquillity depended.

“ He thought, that the harmony of the po-  
 “ litical world was no more destroyed by the  
 “ variety of Civil Institutions, in different States,  
 “ than that of the physical world by the different  
 “ magnitudes of the bodies which constitute the  
 “ system. There is one glory of the Sun, and  
 “ another glory of the Stars, and so forth; but the  
 “ Holy Alliance seemed to be of opinion that it  
 “ would be desirable to make our glory as like  
 “ to that of the Sun and Moon of the Con-  
 “ tinent, as possible—but,” said Mr. Canning,  
 “ they had better leave us quiet in our sphere,  
 “ or we shall make most unharmonious musick.”

Such were Mr. Canning's notions of the re-

lative position of the different States of Europe, one towards the other; and such was the language which he held to our Continental Allies, when they complained that he was too democratical.

On the other hand, when, at the commencement of the Session of 1824, the Opposition in Parliament insinuated a contrary charge against him, and magnified the danger to this Country from the designs of the Holy Alliance, and the increased power which it had derived from the French success: when they lavished much vituperation upon that league of Sovereigns, on account of their administration of the internal concerns of their own dominions; and when they predicted that the Alliance would, in process of time, “ wound the pride, and outrage the feelings of  
“ the people of this country; not, however, by  
“ any direct and immediate measures, but by  
“ accustoming us by degrees, to bear first one  
“ thing, and then another, till at last when they  
“ had come to that point at which we necessarily must stop, we should find that we had  
“ lost the golden opportunity of resisting them  
“ with success: and having lost with it that  
“ which to individuals was every thing, and to  
“ nations almost every thing, viz. our honour,  
“ we should be driven, at the good time of these  
“ Sovereigns, and not at our own, to wage a  
“ long and sanguinary, and perhaps unsuccessful  
“ struggle, against those whom we could have



“ resisted successfully, had we resisted them in “ the outset of their aggressions \* ; ” then Mr. Canning did not hesitate to raise his voice in defence of the Sovereigns who were attacked. For although there was no individual in existence, who was more alive than himself to the evil consequences which might result from the proceedings of the Holy Alliance, if some means were not devised to put a decided check upon them, yet he held that the resistance here recommended, was not the best, or surest mode of effecting such a purpose.

When he first came into office he found this country entangled with that Alliance. From that entanglement he was determined to set It free ; but he thought that that would best be done, not by violently severing the knot which held them together, and convulsing the world with their mutual recoil ; so as to render difficult, if not, impracticable, any future reunion between the former, and any of the members of the latter ; but rather by so loosening the ties which bound them to each other, as that, when the opportunity offered for dissolving those ties altogether, the Monarchs from whom, as a body, Great Britain disengaged herself, might not be left united amongst themselves against Her, but might be ready individually to main-

tain with Her the relations of the strictest friendship.

“ For surely,” said Mr. Canning, in answer to Mr. Brougham’s philippick, in which the learned gentleman magnified and set forth in terms of glowing eloquence, and indignant invective, the tyrannical conduct of the Austrian Government in Lombardy, “ surely it would be any thing but “ sound policy, to refuse to hold communion “ with States unless they were possessed of free “ Constitutions : — we cannot,” continued he, “ make a new world, nor form another of ‘ one “ ‘ entire and perfect chrysolite,’ we must deal “ with the world as it is, and it is the business of “ this Country to maintain her external relations, “ to preserve her connection with the great “ Powers of Europe with reference to the *corpus “ imperii*, on broad and general principles of “ State policy, without examining too minutely “ into abuses which may exist in their Govern- “ ments, or into practices which our better Go- “ vernment, and happier Institutions enable us “ to criticise with severity, or denounce with “ abhorrence.

“ The true policy of England,” he said, “ was “ to move steadily on in her own orbit, without “ looking too nicely to the conduct of the Powers “ in alliance with her ; to be content with her “ own glory, and, by its example, to excite other “ nations to arrive at the same advantages which

“ her peculiar system had bestowed upon her ;  
 “ but not by a wild crusade, to endeavour to  
 “ force those advantages upon other Countries ;  
 “ converting blessings into curses, as respected  
 “ them, and courting danger and difficulty, as  
 “ regarded herself.”

Thus it was that Mr. Canning endeavoured  
 “ to stay the plague both ways ;” and thus he  
 “ held the balance between conflicting principles,  
 “ and contending nations.”

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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